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THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE METIS PRESCHOOL CHILD

by



JUDITH K. HATT

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1969

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Rights and Duties of the Metis Preschool Child" submitted by Judith K. Hatt in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The focus of this thesis is on the six year old child who resides on a Metis colony in northeastern Alberta. Using a structural theoretical model, the thesis describes the rights and duties ascribed to the various social positions available to the child. These social positions are identified by role behavior. Emphasis is placed on social positions within the context of the home--such as offspring and sibling--and their ascribed rights and duties. Rights and duties associated with neighborhood and playschool social positions are also described.

Evident throughout the thesis is the importance of the social structure in defining the boundaries for acceptable behavior in terms of rights and duties. The major concern is not why the child behaves, but why he behaves as he does.

The data for this inductive study were gathered through the various methods labeled as participant observation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to all those who contributed to the completion and production of this thesis.

The Human Resources Research and Development Agency and the Preventive Social Service Branch of the Department of Public Welfare--both of the Government of Alberta--provided grants which made the research possible.

The people of Beaver Metis Colony sustained us with their hospitality and friendships.

Dr. Snyder and Dr. Bishop gave not only academic assistance, but also encouragement during the period of field work in the playschool.

I am indebted to Dr. Fisher for all that I am as a nouveau anthropologist. He guided me through all the phases leading to this rite de passage, and encouraged and inspired me by his own career.

Dr. Hatt, my husband and research partner--we made it together.

Kirstin Hatt came at the right time. She contributed too.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

THE SETTING

Beaver Metis Colony is the setting for this study. Its location is in northeastern Alberta at a longitude of $54^{\circ} 46'$ and a latitude of $111^{\circ} 58'$. The colony is 130 miles north of a major city and 30 miles from a small town. Thus, its setting is an isolated one, particularly given the fact that few residents have transportation.

On the colony is a small village given a Cree name meaning "Our Home". Approximately half of the 450 residents of the colony reside within the village itself. The remainder are scattered throughout the 111,000 acres of the colony.

The climate of the area can be summarized in terms of three different kinds of information: frost data, temperature and precipitation (F. Hatt, 1967:15-16). Taken from data for a thirty year period, the mean number of frost free days is 100--between May 29 and September 6. The maximum and minimum mean daily temperatures for January are 10°F and -8°F . For July they are 75°F and 51°F . The mean annual precipitation is 17.30 inches, with 56.0 inches of snowfall.

The rolling landscape is dotted with sloughs, ponds, bush and occasional stands of young timber. Most mature timber has been cut. Two lakes and various streams and sloughs provide fish and drinking water for the colony. Moose, deer and an occasional bear roam the colony and supply the only substantial meat for the residents. Although the land and the climate are both unsuited to farming, nearly

all of those residing outside of the village have gardens. Small herds of cattle, communally owned by the colony, or owned by extended kinship groups, roam the grasslands.

The area was selected by the Alberta government during the depression to serve as a reserve for "destitute Metis". Most would still be considered "destitute and impoverished". A summary of data indicates that all of Census Division 12, which includes the colony and surrounding areas, is to be considered as underdeveloped (F. Hatt, 1967: 17-19). Few jobs are available in the area either for skilled or unskilled, Metis or non-Metis. Most families draw welfare at least part of the winter. All maintain a bare, subsistence economy.

Living conditions on the colony have remained quite constant from the time that the colony was first organized during the 1930's until 1967 and 1968. At that time most of the housing consisted of one or two room cabins or shacks occupied by an average of seven persons. Many of the cabins were of rough logs. None were insulated, except with mud, and heat was provided by wood and oil stoves. Little furniture was found in the homes. Only five families had any electricity at all, and this was from an extension from the colony supervisor's generator. No plumbing or running water existed. No fresh food was available for purchase at the colony grocery, and prices of staples were high. Few individuals had transportation to go to town. Water from both the community pump and the creek was highly contaminated. Other drinking water came from sloughs.

It is not surprising that health problems abounded. Diarrhea was considered a way of life. Other intestinal disorders were common. A history of tuberculosis was reported in 64 percent of the families.

Over 64 percent of the households had at least one disabled member. Adults in their early fifties looked fifteen to twenty years older than their actual age, and infant mortality was high.

Recent changes by the provincial government have been primarily concerned with housing. Many families were moved out of their old shacks and into newer ones. Large families were allowed houses with three or four rooms instead of their former one or two. These new houses, financed partly by the colony residents and partly by the Metis Rehabilitation Branch, were somewhat superior to the former houses, but still lacked plumbing and adequate insulation. Most of the new houses are already stained on the inside by a frost line.

Two other changes included electricity and telephones being installed in houses nearest the main road, assuming the residents could pay for them. New wells were dug, but some were dry and others inadequate. Other conditions concerning income, food, clothing, transportation and health have remained the same.

Relationships between the colony residents, the resident White supervisor and the Metis Rehabilitation Branch of Welfare are more than strained. F. K. Hatt has elaborated on this in his study of "Responses to Directed Social Change" on Beaver Metis Colony (F. Hatt, 1969).

THE SUBJECT OF STUDY

The subject of the study is the six year old Metis child, who has not yet entered school--the preschooler. This age child was chosen for study for several reasons. First of all he was accessible for observation both during the day and at night, since he does not go away

to school. Secondly, he is old enough to have learned most of the everyday aspects of his culture, and expressive enough to convey what he knows. Thirdly, he was a ready subject for a playschool in which behavior could be observed in a more controlled situation. And fourthly, and probably most important, this is the child who will soon enter school. It seems important to understand what the child will bring with him in terms of behavior patterns and expectations when he enters school. This should have important implications for the schools in coming to understand these now somewhat misunderstood children and in coming to understand how they can begin the education process in such a way that the Metis child can benefit from it.

THE OBJECT OF STUDY

The objective of the study is to discover the rights and duties of the Metis six year old preschool child who resides on the colony and to describe them as they are related to the various social positions held by the child. The study is primarily descriptive for three reasons. First of all, this is a novel field study--there are no previously published parallel data. Second, the study is directed toward an overall or large scale "understanding", particularly of non-psychological and non-anthropological problems. Third, a descriptive study avoids the psychological determinism of either the dynamic or behavioral approach. Further, neither "ethnosemantics", "ethnoscience" nor componential analysis is used. In these approaches the units of analysis are too small and too irrelevant to describe the social and institutional structure.

In the first place, the name, "componential analysis," is in many ways a misnomer. It is true that the development of formal semantic analysis was facilitated by the involvement of the "component" as an analytic entity in linguistics and that many practitioners of the art found their way to it from linguistics, but the notion of "component" or "factor" as a general analytical device is too old and widespread, in lexicography, biology, mathematics, sociology, psychology, and in anthropology itself to serve as a particular designation. What distinguishes these analyses in the methodological sense is their rigor and insistence on internal form, and in the theoretical sense their recognition of a superordinate level of determinants in an analytic domain. (Hammel, 1965:2)

DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

The theoretical aspects of this thesis are a result of the meshing of definitions and concepts from Yehudi Cohen (1961), Elman Service (1961), Anthony F. C. Wallace (1965), Ralph Linton (1936), and Ward Goodenough (1965).

Cohen provides the theoretical stance labeled as "structural" that forms the basis of this study. Cohen distinguishes between the structural approach to personality as opposed to the cultural approach and utilizes the former. Culture and personality studies have "... tended to concentrate its energies on the meanings which a culture has to the individual as well as on the relationships between personality and different facets of culture ..." (Cohen, 1961:3). This area of anthropology has a long history beginning with Margaret Mead's study of adolescents in Samoa (Mead, 1961). A more recent approach emphasizes the "... consequences of institutional or socio-structural arrangements

for the development and functioning of ... personality" (Cohen, 1961:4). Given the structural relationship of the colony to the Metis Rehabilitation Branch, and the unique social structure of the colony itself, the latter model was chosen over the first.

Wallace presents two approaches to culture and personality studies that also seem applicable to studies concerning structure and personality. One approach emphasizes the replication of uniformity and the other the organization of diversity. The former assumes cultural homogeneity and the microcosmic metaphor.

If a near-perfect correspondence between culture and individual nuclear character is assumed, the structural relation between the two becomes non-problematical, and the interest of processual research lies rather in the mechanisms of socialization by which each generation becomes, culturally and characterologically a replica of its predecessors. This viewpoint is particularly congenial to the world view associated with dynamic psychology, ultimately based on Freud's psychoanalytic theories, but modified by conceiving the personality to reflect faithfully the culture in which it was formed and not merely universal constants, such as the Oedipus conflict and the stages of psycho-sexual maturation. (Wallace, 1965:26-27)

The latter model, the organization of diversity, is the one most heavily drawn from in this thesis and holds that:

When the fact of diversity is emphasized, the obvious question must immediately be asked: how do such various individuals organize themselves culturally into orderly, expanding, changing societies? When the process of socialization is examined closely, it becomes apparent that, within the limits of practical human control and observation, it is not a perfectly reliable mechanism for replication. (Wallace, 1965:27-28)

This model is concerned with the processes by which diverse individuals work to maintain, increase, or restore organization (Wallace, 1965:92). These organizational processes explain the relationships between socio-cultural systems and personality systems (Wallace, 1965:85).

Culture, as seen from this view point, becomes not so much a super-organic thing sui generis, but policy, tacitly and gradually concocted by groups of people for the furtherance of their interests; and also contract, established by practice, between and among individuals to organize their strivings into mutually facilitating equivalence structures. (Wallace, 1965:28)

The primary interest is in discovering the content of the socio-cultural system of rights and duties that provides the boundaries for personality development. This is a major concern of Yehudi Cohen who emphasizes the consequences of socio-structural arrangements for the development and functioning of personality (Cohen, 1961).

Another basic tenet of this theory is that social organization is not dependent on a high degree of personal conformity, but on a complementarity of different roles.

Culture can be conceived as a set of standardized models of such contractual relationships, in which the equivalent roles are specified and available for implementation to any two parties whose motives make their adoption promising. The relationship is based not on a sharing, but on a complementarity of cognitions and motives. (Wallace, 1965: 41).

My interest is not only to discover the content of the rights and duties, but also to discover their dynamic aspects--those of role behavior.

Thus, I will be dealing with three levels of abstraction: the

least abstract is role behavior. This is the unit of observation. More abstract are the rights and duties which are inferred from the role behavior. These rights and duties are the units of analysis. The most abstract level is composed of social positions. These positions are inferred from the rights and duties. In this thesis attention is focused upon the role behavior of the six year old preschool Metis child, with an interest in determining the range of behavior--in terms of rights and duties--that is acceptable for a child filling a particular social position.

As this thesis is describing the structural relations between role behavior, rights and duties and social position as "policy" or "standardized models", the psychodynamic approach of Erikson (1950), the childhood determinist model of Gorer (1950), the psycho-functional model of Malinowski (1953), and the modal-basic personality structure models of the projective test orientation (Kardiner, 1949) are not relevant to this study.

The following definitions and concepts will make the position of this thesis more clear. Roles are viewed as the dynamic aspects of rights and duties (Linton, 1936:114). They are viewed as processes manifest in behavior. The role behavior of the Metis children was observed in various physical and social settings. The common sociological aspects of these settings provide the bridge between observed role behavior and more abstract rights and duties. In following the definition of Ward Goodenough, combinations of rights and duties will be termed "statuses" (Goodenough, 1965:2). These will be treated as conceptually distinct from social positions, although, in fact, they are inseparable. Rights and duties can only be inferred from the behavior

of an individual filling a particular social position among the variety of social positions available to various individuals. Rights and duties will be seen as privileges and liabilities that "serve to define boundaries within which the parties to social relationships are expected to confine their behavior.... (The) boundaries (the rights and duties) command our attention and not the domain of idiosyncratic freedom ..." (Goodenough, 1965:3). Thus, role behavior, socio-cultural settings, and boundaries are the concerns of this description.

Statuses or rights and duties are associated with a particular social position. Service provides the definition of social position which I will use: a social position is a classification "... of persons made in terms of certain characteristics, ascribed and inherent (such as age, sex, etc.) ..." (Service, 1964:24). "... Social positions ... are assigned conventional attributes and roles that regulate or influence the conduct of interpersonal relations" (Service, 1964:19). These social positions will "... refer to positions held in the society at large ... (and) can be located on an objectified map of the social organization ..." (Service, 1964:12). This sociocentric definition is opposed to an egocentric one in which one cannot specify a social position except in terms of ego's relation to someone else (Service, 1964:12-13).

Both nonfamilistic and familistic social positions may be viewed sociocentrically. One can discuss the rights and duties associated with the social position of playmate and neighbor, as well as those associated with son, sibling, or cousin. Service points out that "It is necessary ... to make an explicit definition of kinship (positions).... They are not simply labels for the parts and groups of

the society, but are the names or titles referring to social positions that determine forms of interpersonal conduct" (Service, 1964:24).

For the six year old in this study, social positions are based on ascribed and inherent characteristics. None of the social positions considered are achieved. At any one time, an individual may hold several social positions. For example, a child may be a six year old; the youngest in the family, "the baby"; the oldest child at home during the day, "little man"; "a Larioux"; "a son"; "a brother"; and a playmate or "friend". However, since social positions influence the conduct of interpersonal relations, he obviously cannot behave in terms of the rights and duties of all of these positions simultaneously. On the basis of inherent, physical and social factors, he must select the position or compatible positions that will determine his role behavior.

Sex, age and relative age are inherent factors which determine some social positions. An individual may hold the social position of oldest brother, the oldest in the daytime play group, the youngest in the evening play group, and cousin of intermediate age rank, or member of a large extended kin group.

In the above, it is evident that time may be a factor in determining the situation and the social position selected. During the day, while older children are at school, the six year old at home may enjoy the rights and duties of being the oldest; however, in the evening, when his siblings return, his social position may be that of baby, since he is the youngest.

Proximity and distance may also determine the selection of social positions. Who the child comes in contact with may determine his social position. A child may hold a particular social position because

his parents reside in an isolated part of the colony. Or, he may hold another position because he lives in proximity to a large number of kinsmen. The cultural ecology or geography of the community is an "inherent" factor in social position. A child cannot hold the social position of playmate if he does not reside in proximity to other children. He cannot hold the social position of cousin, unless there are cousins with whom he may interact.

Social factors determining social positions may include how long a family has resided on the colony, or whether or not he has kinsmen with whom to cooperate. Thus, in this sense, the description of "inherent" situations with common sociological characteristics in this particular community defines the boundaries to the role behaviors culturally appropriate to this community.

Social positions make up the social structure. The network of relationships between individuals or egocentric or personal statuses will be regarded as of a different order and will not be included in the social structure.

Thus, I am not concerned with the processes between individuals, nor with the processes within individuals. However, the model used has important implications both for social relationships and for the development of personality. The rights and duties associated with various social positions determine the forms of interpersonal conduct; rights and duties also provide the boundaries within which personality develops. The model is a static one, whose purpose is to describe the rights and duties of the preschool Metis child that are ascribed to his various social positions within a given community setting.

Although explanations are not central to the objective of this

thesis, when they are given they are primarily social structural rather than social psychological. The tradition of explaining social phenomenon in social rather than psychological terms has its roots in Compté and Durkheim (Durkheim, 1938:89-124). More recently, White (1947) and Cohen (1961) have stressed culturological or social structural explanations. This position holds that a psychological interpretation may explain why an individual behaves, but it does not explain why he chooses to behave in one way as opposed to another. This a social explanation can do. This thesis is not concerned with what is happening in the child, but the ways that behaviors are directed by the social structure.

The explanations and interpretations given are not verifiable. However, given the social context and an understanding of similar situations, the explanation given is one that could be correct.

Most of the descriptions given in this thesis are synchronic. However, since the same children were observed over a three year period, some descriptions are diachronic. The thesis is written in the ethnographic present, with diachronic data specifically noted. In this thesis the amount and depth of data is not even, due to limitations on either participation or observation. The difficulty in gathering uniform data bearing on social structure also added to this situation.

In sum, the descriptive, social structural, orientation of this thesis directs the reader to the inherent formal characteristics of a Metis community in northern Alberta--characteristics which are common to Metis communities generally and which may be considered to be "Metis culture". This structural orientation avoids the psychological determinism of "why do Metis people behave" and focuses upon the determinants of "why they behave the way they do". Questions of motive

or motivation, problems of so-called "cultural deprivation", and "culture of poverty", discussions of "values" or "ethos" are circumvented by the structural orientation; thus, making it possible to directly assess the northern Alberta Metis community for potential evolution, or cultural growth and change.

METHODOLOGY

The orientation of this research is in the direction of achieving an understanding of one society in some detail, rather than that of comparing societies for the purpose of generalizing about human behavior.

Roles of the Researcher

The primary method used for gathering data was that of participant observation, although some informant interviewing and enumerating were done. My roles in each of these methods were varied and will subsequently be described. The significance of such role analysis on the part of the researcher is supported by Vidich (1955: 354), Kluckhohn (1940:343) and Schwartz (1955:352), among others.

Specifically, Vidich states that:

The role of the participant observer and the images which respondents hold of him are central to the definition of his social position; together these two factors shape the circumstances under which he works and the type of data he will be able to collect. (Vidich, 1955: 354)

Kluckhohn points out that the researcher in being

... forced to analyze his own roles, is, on the one hand, less misled by the myth

of complete objectivity in social research and, on the other hand, more consciously aware of his own biases. (Kluckhohn, 1940:343)

Junker (1952) has suggested four theoretically possible roles for the researcher in conducting field work. Gold, as part of Junker's research team, has summarized these roles. They range

... from the complete participant at one extreme to the complete observer at the other. Between these, but nearer the former, is the participant-as-observer; nearer the latter is the observer-as-participant. (Gold, 1958:217)

The various roles I played in the field will be discussed partially in terms of this scale.

Approximately five months were spent in the field--two months in the summer of 1966, two months in the summer of 1967, and one month in the summer of 1968. Other contacts with the people were made by sporadic visits to the colony throughout the three year period, plus visits of the people to the city, at which times they were guests in our home.

My husband and I first entered the field for the explicit purpose of gathering data for the Alberta government's study of impoverished areas. My husband, a Ph.D. candidate in sociology, served as research director for the study of Metis on Beaver Colony, as well as Metis in the surrounding area. I was appointed as an interviewer. In order that the data be comparable with that from other impoverished areas, the research plan called for the use of survey methods and an interview schedule. I, with the aid of my husband, was to interview the residents of each household on the colony. Questions from the interview schedule were concerned with general family information, plus informa-

tion concerning living and economic conditions. Questions concerning attitudes and ambitions were included.

At this point my role was primarily that of researcher--or that of "participant as observer", in Junker's terms. The Metis seemed to accept this role, since they felt that if the government were aware of their living conditions, perhaps they would be improved. Initial rumors concerning our being on the colony included the following: we were there to inquire about child care and would take away their children if it did not meet our approval; we were there to gather information to write a book and would "make a million"; we were there to gather favor for the government in power. Metis in another area off the colony thought we had come to sterilize them. The former view, that we could help change their living conditions (get electricity, running water, roads, and telephones), prevailed, however, and we met with little open hostility even at first.

Rapport was difficult to achieve in this role in which we were only secondarily participants and primarily observers. In retrospect, it appears that this method of gathering data is culturally inappropriate to this society. One is expected to learn by observing and listening, and not by direct questions; one never speaks until rapport is established (thus, rapport is not established through verbal means); one does not ask or talk about topics which are obvious (and most of the conditions related to their living were obvious even to us). Thus, much of the validity and reliability of the data gathered in this manner is suspect.

My role as researcher had value, however, in that it provided our reason for entry onto the colony and a reason for calling on each

resident--whether we were welcome or not. We gathered valuable general information about the residents--names, ages, family members, education, etc. This helped us to become acquainted with the people very quickly. It also provided a means for finding out information which we might not otherwise have gotten in such a uniform manner.

As we became better acquainted on the colony, and became known as participators rather than observers, the interview schedules were used less conspicuously. Information was gathered more indirectly, or at least more apologetically--"It's our job and we're stuck with it."

While we were researchers on the colony, we also filled the roles of guests (rather than roomers and boarders, which we actually were). We lived during the first summer with a family of four children--ranging in age from one year to eight years--and their two parents. They were members of a dominant kinship group on the colony and resided in a three room frame house. We were given one room. We paid them substantially for the room, meals and the invasion of their privacy. In the home of our hosts we were given deferential treatment as guests for about two weeks. After that period we were considered primarily as friends rather than guests. The children lost their shyness, the parents yelled at their children less, and special foods ceased. After this period colony residents no longer used our hosts as intermediaries and confronted us directly with questions or problems.

Although we were considered as visiting friends to our hosts after the initial period, we were considered as guests in most of the other homes. We were generally offered tea or coffee and special (expensive) cookies, in our roles as guests. In our roles as friends we were asked for favors--a ride or an errand in town, for example.

In our roles as both guests and friends we were complete participators as well as complete observers--using Junker's terminology. We were complete participators in that we accepted the style of life found on the colony--and were dependent upon that style for food, shelter, friendship and recreation. In this role, they and we ourselves assumed that we were alike; thus, some role pretense was necessary on our part. A feeling of having taken advantage of them was somewhat created.

This role of participator somewhat violated the role of observer, since as a friend or guest or genuine participator one does not ask questions. The value of the participation, however, lay in the fact that to some extent we learned to experience life as they experienced it. This creates the further problem labeled "going native", in which one accepts their views as one's own. We attempted to counteract this over-involvement by leaving the colony every other weekend. This provided us, as well as our hosts, with much needed rest and privacy. It also provided a cooling off period, however, where my husband and I could view our participation on the colony with some objectivity. During these periods, we exchanged views, tested ideas and abstracted some of our experiences. This helped us to put our experiences as participators into the framework of that of observers.

Participation, at all times, was limited by the fact that we were White, although I'm sure the restrictions were minimal at times. We were not welcome at the large card parties, for example, for fear--on the part of the elderly mostly--that we would have them arrested for betting. Being White, we could never fully comprehend their feelings about being "half-breeds", as they are often called. Being from the city, which is correlated with being White, also set us apart. In

almost all cases we were defined as being marginal.

Being marginal, however, had its advantages. After rapport was established, people spoke to us concerning their feelings about being Metis, about their relationships with the governmental hierarchy, about the interpersonal relationships within the colony that they would not generally discuss with those close to them. By being marginal, our social position was not threatening to them from an internal point of view.

Being a married female, I had access to information gathered from women that my husband did not have. On the other hand, my participation with men was limited. As a married couple, my husband and I participated with other couples and were able to collect data that neither of us could have gotten separately. For example, we became a part of the cross sex teasing that occurs between spouses.

My participation with other women was somewhat limited by the fact that I had no children. Children are central to their lives and a woman without them is considered deviant. Because I had no children, I was not considered fully as an adult.

These were the roles that I occupied that first summer as a complete observer. Although the Metis were aware of our roles as government researchers, they were not aware of our larger interests in researching them. My husband and I were both interested in social structure. His interests were general, while I focused on its specific relationship to socialization. In this sense, we were complete observers. They did not know they were being observed. Under the guise of doing homework or writing reports or letters, I was able to record whole conversations. From the semi-privacy of our room, I was able to

record most of the household happenings as they took place. I kept a diary to provide the general context for the anecdotal data I collected.

It is primarily from my role as participator and observer that most of the data for this thesis were collected, rather than from the data collected in the role of researcher. Except for the role of researcher, all of the roles I held the first year continued for the second and third summers on the colony. However, these roles were made somewhat more specific and new ones were added.

During the second summer, we were invited into more homes as guests and more friendships developed. We were able to observe more and more families and gather data on the interpersonal relationships that took place within them. The relationship with our previous hosts became an even closer one. From this family I was now able to gather data comparable to that gathered in the previous year. The children were a year older. I could compare differences in relationships. I now had data that could be viewed diachronically.

Three important changes in my social position took place the second summer. I organized a summer playschool and became the teacher. This provided our reason for being on the colony the second summer. In this role I held a legitimate position in the social structure and acquired the right to discuss and ask questions about children. In this role I was welcomed into the homes of the six year old students. These children then became the focus of my study.

During the second summer, we resided in a trailer, which was placed on a lot located between the neighborhoods of two major kinship groups. Thus, we were no longer so closely identified with the kinship group of our previous hosts, and our participation with other kinship

groups increased. By residing on our own, I became a housewife and now had legitimate reasons for discussing and asking questions concerning household affairs. Being from the city, I was not expected to know how to live without modern conveniences, so much advice was offered.

The third important role addition was that I was obviously a prospective mother. I now had attained adult status. I was given advice by other mothers. They accepted and answered my questions on child care and rearing. Some were convinced that their "good country air" had so blessed me, and rapport was further increased.

Thus, during this summer, I was able to gain a great deal of perspective and collect comparative data to add to the detailed data that I had collected the previous summer while residing with a family.

During the third summer, my roles again fell into the categories of complete participator and complete observer. My roles included returning visitor, mother, and hostess. It is during this summer that almost all role pretense disappeared, except for that of observer. They came to know us as we were, and data included their responses to us as people. We were still marginal, but they accepted us. Our visits to the colony that summer were brief, but frequent. Upon returning, we were treated as friends and guests and were brought up to date on the social life of the colony.

This summer, our now year old daughter was added to our family research team. Their responses to me concerning her, plus their responses to her became important data.

During this year, our previous hosts on the colony became our guests in the city. It is during this period that we became fictive kinsmen. The woman and I related as sisters who do not live in the same

neighborhood, and thus do not necessarily cooperate, but who share a close relationship. My relationship with her husband at times included joking, but was generally quite formal. Our children reacted as cousins.

Late in the summer, a new child was born to this family, at which time the older children and one cousin came to the city to stay with us for a week. This intensified the fictive kin role and I was ascribed the role of aunt. The responses of the Metis to us in our own setting, and their responses to the city, all became important data. The roles of the Metis outside of their own environment became an important test of reliability.

On our final visit to the colony I collected data concerning the new baby at the home of our fictive kin. Here I could observe changes in family relationships and observe responses to the newborn.

In summary, it is apparent that most of the data were gathered by the methods of participant-observation. My various roles ranged from complete participator to complete observer, with intervening intervals, as suggested by Junker. The roles I played and the social positions I filled determined not only the kinds of data I had access to, but the reliability of that data. The methodology used more closely resembled, in Berreman's analogy, that of the Trukese navigator than that of the European navigator, in that my objective was more clear than the plan for reaching it. He describes the Trukese navigator as one who "... sets off toward the objective and responds to conditions as they arise in an ad hoc fashion" (Berreman, 1966:347). By using various methods, data relating specifically to the rights and duties of the six year old, as well as data relating to the social field as a whole were gathered.

The Sample

One of the problems inherent in the participant-observation method of research is that it is difficult to gather specific data that are comparable. For example, one would rarely observe situations in various households which would be comparable; the variables are too numerous and complex. However, within such variability, I was able to determine accepted limits on behavior--the boundaries of rights and duties. Thus, variability may be great, but the limits become defined.

Although data on the rights and duties of six year olds were collected from all the major kinship groups as well as from those outside of these groups, the data used in this thesis do not equally represent all families. About half of the data used in this thesis to describe the roles of the six year old in the home were gathered in the home of our hosts. Approximately three-eighths of the data in this section represent the other major kinship groups--with the exception of one, where little data was collected. The remaining one-eighth represents those few families not belonging to a major kinship group.

The data gathered concerning the rights and duties of the child in the context of the neighborhood and village primarily represent those who reside within the village itself. This represents three major kinship groups of the five kin groups on the colony.

The data relating to the children in the school setting represent all of the six year old children on the colony except for one. The mothers who served as teacher aids represent four of the five major kinship groups.

Reliability and Validity

Checks on reliability included: observing the same people in varied social positions over a three year period, observing all of the families on the colony, and viewing the field from various personal social positions. Comparing notes with my husband also provided a check on the consistency of the data.

Although checking validity is somewhat more tenuous, it is assumed that the use of various techniques in data collection would increase its validity. By repeated viewing of the same or similar kinds of situations, contradictions were minimized. Also, the behavior of the people seems to bear out the validity of the categories chosen for descriptive purposes. Behavior seems to indicate that the categories used--rights and duties--have for the people a kind of psychological reality.

Analysis of the Data

Analyzing the data included both generalizing and abstracting. The observed behavior was organized primarily in terms of social structure. Generalizations were formed which describe the social context as a whole. Other, more specific generalizations describe and define the boundaries of acceptable behavior of the six year old pre-school child. From the latter, the rights and duties were abstracted. By further abstraction, the social positions associated with the various rights and duties were derived.

Meaning, inferences and explanations were based on contextualization, Verstehen, and to some extent intuition. Firth, in following Malinowski, stresses the importance of grasping the social context in

order to apprehend the meaning of behavior. "The context of associated circumstances allows ... (the anthropologist) to see the end of the activity and the value attached--that is, the quality of the relationship inferred" (Firth, 1963:22-23).

Verstehen may be seen as "... the application of personal experience to observed behavior" (Abel, 1948:216). One understands an observed or assumed connection if one is able to parallel either one with something learned through self-observation. Thus, Verstehen becomes the product of participant-observation.

Berreman, in discussing intuition as a legitimate method used by ethnographers, states that intuition stems from "... inference that is unanalyzed because it is based on complex cues, subliminal cues, or subtle reasoning" (Berreman, 1966:349).

To summarize, data were gathered by the researcher who held various social positions in the colony social structure. The primary method used was that of participant observation. Using an inductive approach, the researcher organized the data around the concepts of rights and duties and social positions.

HISTORY OF THE METIS COLONY

Definition of a "Metis"

The concept of Metis is a complex one. It generally represents a population of people considered as the offspring of an Amerind and a European or a Euro-Canadian. Yet the term "Metis" does not refer to all people fitting this definition. The majority of such peoples have become a part of the larger stream of Canadian society and

are not known as "Metis". The term "Metis" is applicable to those people who fail to meet the legal or social requisites of either Indian or White and yet are the offspring of both. It is only within the province of Alberta that the Metis is legally recognized. Elsewhere, he is considered as Canadian, with no special qualifications. In Alberta the legal definition of Metis is

... a person of mixed White and Indian blood having not less than one-quarter Indian blood, but does not include either an Indian or a non-treaty Indian as defined in the Indian Act (Canada).
(Metis Betterment Act, 1942)

The problems in computing "one-quarter Indian blood" become apparent when one considers that "Indian blood" is in itself "mixed", and to be able to compute one-quarter would rely on both reputation and memory.

The social definition of Metis is based on physical traits--those resembling an Indian--on surname, on occupation and on place of residence. A Metis is such because he is so reputed, and he himself accepts this position.

Thus, a Metis is an individual who generally has the physical traits of an Indian and lacks both the legal rights of Indians and the social rights of Whites. Culturally, Metis are a mixture of both Indian and White, but in many ways they are neither.

A Metis Dichotomy

Richard Slobodin, in describing the Metis, distinguishes between two socially and culturally different Metis in the Northwest Territories. One he terms the "Red River Metis" and the other the "Northern Metis" (Slobodin, 1966). Below is a summary of some of the salient differences (Slobodin, 1966:158).

The Red River Metis, according to Slobodin, are predominately of Algonkian, Iroquoian or Athapaskan (of the Slave region) ancestry. The Northern Metis are predominately Athapaskan (of the lower Mackenzie and middle Yukon regions). The Red River Metis reflect French (Canadian) or gallicized Scotch or Irish ancestry, while the Northern Metis reflect predominately Scotch and Scandinavian ancestry. The Red River Metis are primarily Roman Catholic, while the latter are traditionally Anglican. The Red River Metis recognize few European or Indian kin and are descendants of remote miscegenation. The Northern Metis recognize an appreciable number of Indian, Eskimo and White kin and are descendants of relatively recent miscegenation.

The Red River Metis possess an autonomous Metis tradition, stemming from an old Upper Canada, the Metis "Nation" of the old Northwest, and the "voyageur" way of life. This tradition is distinct from the Northern tradition, which is related to the Hudson's Bay Company in the northern Mackenzie District and to the aboriginal society to which the Metis are related.

The Metis I am describing know little of their own history--at least to any depth--and are unable to tell us from which tradition they have come. Most adults know where their parents were born, but little else. Most are aware of the kind of European stock from which they are descended--to some extent this is manifest in their surnames and language. Most know little more of their family history.

Only two elderly men on the colony seemed to know something of their family history. One, of Cree-French extraction, knew that his father had been a "voyageur" on the North Saskatchewan River. Another, with an "Indian" surname connected with the Riel Rebellion, knew that

his kinsmen had played an important part in the rebellion which attempted to establish a Metis nation. Although he did not know details, he spoke of this tradition with pride. Thus, we have two indicators that at least two of the kinship groups were probably of the Red River tradition.

For the others, it is even more difficult to say. Some traits seem to relate them to the Northern tradition and some to the Red River tradition. Of the five major kinship groups on the colony, two have French surnames, one Norwegian, and two are possible transliterations from Amerind names. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics are found. Some colony residents recognize White and/or Indian kin, while others recognize or remember none. Thus, we find traits associated with both traditions. Relating kinship groups to a particular tradition is further obscured by the fact that one kinship group may possess traits associated with both traditions.

The only culture trait held universally on the colony which seems to relate them to the Red River tradition is that all of them are of Algonkian (Cree) rather than Athapaskan ancestry. This is manifest in the speech of most adults. If they themselves cannot speak Cree, at least one of their parents can. Although the residents are Cree-Metis, other culture traits are diverse.

Beaver Metis Colony

The diversity on the colony is not surprising, given the artificial nature of the settlement. It was established by the Provincial Government of Alberta under the Metis Betterment Act between the years 1938 and 1942. The Act was derived from evidence gathered by

the Half-Breed (Metis) Commission of 1935, which made inquiries into the education, health and living conditions of the Metis. They were found to be destitute. The scrip for land which they were awarded under the Dominion Lands Act of 1883 in exchange for any rights they received as Indians was soon lost to speculators. From that time, the Metis had no claim to land. Hunting and fishing, their traditional means of subsistence, were diminished as lands were turned into farms. The depression of the 1930's further worsened their condition. The plight of the Metis came to the White man's attention when Metis who were residing on Indian reserves and collecting treaty money were forced to leave. The Half-Breed Commission was then formed.

As a temporary solution to the problems of the Metis during the depression, the Commission set aside six areas in Alberta for Metis settlement. Eight colonies were formed on the lands. Requirements for becoming a member of a settlement include fulfilling the legal definition of Metis, plus those requirements set down by each colony. On Beaver Colony, which we are describing, the local council accepts applications from Metis for settlement and then the council votes on the acceptance or rejection of each particular family. Early settlers were subject to veto only by the supervisor of the Metis Branch (a Department of Welfare appointment held in Edmonton).

Of the five major kinship groups residing on the colony, all but one were represented among the early settlers. A later large extended kinship group did not arrive until some thirty years later. In 1962 the population of the colony was 194. With the arrival of this later related group, the population was nearly doubled. Between 1964 and 1966 the population increased by only 30, bringing the total to

approximately 450.

The first settlers scattered themselves over the 111,000 acres of the colony, forming scarcely any community at all. Then, a nucleus for a community was formed when a small general store was built as a part of the local supervisor's house and office. A school with grades from one to six housed in temporary buildings and a teacherage were built nearby. Eventually two small churches were built. A communal barn and a community hall completed the number of buildings that formed the village nucleus. Today the school and its buildings have been moved to the centralized district in the nearby town.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE COLONY

In the late 1930's and early 1940's families moved to the area set aside as Beaver Metis Colony. The offspring of these original settlers married, set up residence and established families of their own on the colony. It is primarily these adults--offspring of original settlers--which form the patterns which make up the social structure.

Residence Patterns

The most striking feature of the social structure is that over 75 percent of the population of the colony belong to five patrinytic extended families. Each of these families resides in an area on the colony socially defined as its own. Two of these neighborhoods are primarily within the village, two are outside of the village, and one stretches to include both. Small extended families have their own limited neighborhoods. Elders not part of extended families tend to live in town, while nuclear families with no kin ties tend to live in

the most isolated parts of the colony.

The Extended Family

The most dominant social institution on the colony is the extended family. The composition of the five major extended families on the colony varies; however, all are composed of at least one senior member, the married offspring of the latter (who are thus siblings) and their children. The actual composition of the extended families varies according to the sex ratio of the conjugal family. Thus, two extended families have patrilocal features, and one matrilocal. The other two are composed of brothers and sisters and their families.

Marriage Patterns

Members of these major extended families have not intermarried, but have chosen spouses either from within their own kinship group or from other families residing on the colony. Thus, the residence pattern of these extended families has been maintained. Inter-marriage between these extended families is becoming more common, however, in the next generation (third generation on the colony).

In the few cases in which two major extended family members have intermarried, they have come from groups that reside adjacent to each other and have established their new residence where the two areas converge. Almost all marriages are endogamous within the colony.

Only one extended family has been endogamous within itself. Within this family, three paternal parallel cousin marriages exist.

In all cases in this study, marriages are referred to within a social context rather than a legal one, since some marriages are common law.

Family Cooperation

A major function of the extended families is that of cooperation. To a large extent, the nuclear families that make up the extended family are interdependent--socially, economically and politically. Women within an extended family share babysitting, household goods and tasks. They pick berries, can and sew together.

In two of the extended families the men are economically interdependent. In both families the men farm and raise cattle together. In most ways they are self-sufficient. The men of the other extended families are supported in varying degrees by wages, social allowance for those disabled, and social assistance for seasonal workers. Related men hunt and fish together and share the benefits. Men also share transportation, since vehicles on the colony are scarce. Men and women share both goods and exchange favors.

Children within each kinship group, who thus live in proximity, form the play group. Cousins who live at the far ends of their neighborhood often visit each other. Adults within the extended family visit, play cards, and attend other social events together.

Politically, each extended family forms a strong faction within the colony. Since family members vote as a body, the political power of an extended family is determined by its size. Thus, residents of the colony who have no kinsmen are both physically and socially isolated. Without kinsmen, they must rely heavily on social assistance for subsistence.

Language is another factor which binds family members together and separates them from others. Both English and Cree are spoken on the colony. Only a very few elderly adults and a very few young children

can speak only Cree. Since language patterns of siblings tend to be similar, the large extended families can be identified by their language. Most adults can and do speak Cree among themselves and to their elders. However, within the nuclear families, English is spoken. Thus, few of their children speak Cree; a few can understand it. Between extended families, various dialects of Cree reputedly exist. Only the most isolated families speak Cree as their first language. Even so, school children teach English to their younger siblings before they begin school.

Social Control of Children

Although the number of and the severity of overt controls placed on a child's behavior by his parents varies by nuclear family, certain trends emerge which tend to distinguish between extended families. Although all parents on the colony are permissive in the White, middle-class sense of the word, the degree varies. The two extended families which exhibit the most controls over their children have the following traits in common: non-village residence, where it is reputedly easier to control children; self-supporting subsistence by farming and cattle raising; and relatively active in a Protestant church. In the case of one of these two extended families, most of the controls seem related to those that their church dictates. In the other, the controls are evident on their teen-aged children who are not allowed to socialize in the village. The other three extended families, most of whose members live within the village, seem much more permissive than the other two. However, more was learned about the latter three than the former two. Generally, the most permissive parents are those who

have no other kinsmen on the colony and live in relative social and physical isolation.

THE COLONY AS A SOCIAL UNIT

Sodalities

The number of voluntary associations that cut across kinship lines are few on the colony. Three will be described: religious groups, the Metis Association, and recreation groups.

Churches. Religious organizations on the colony can only be considered sodalities in a limited sense. Although membership is voluntary, each extended family generally identifies itself with a particular church. Only three of the five large extended families are somewhat active in a church, and each one in a different one. Only three churches are represented on the colony: an evangelical Protestant church, the United Church of Canada, and the Roman Catholic church. The church officials do not reside on the colony and come only for services on Sunday. It is evident that the church is not of central importance for a majority of the colony residents. Most children are baptized, although that particular faith may not be important to the family. Although the adults may not be particularly active in the Roman Catholic church, each year a large number of children receive instruction and first holy communion. It is a festive occasion, and the children receive new clothing, or clothing previously worn by a cousin or sibling. Some women, otherwise not active in the church, attend a three day long pilgrimage to a nearby shrine during a period set aside for "Indians". The mothers return with medals for their children, but they

are worn only for short periods.

For the people, the most important parts of weddings and funerals are those which center around the home rather than center on the church. Women may attend a church wedding dressed in old clothes, since they have just left the preparations for the wedding feast, and wearing curlers in their hair in preparation for the wedding dance in the evening. When a well respected individual dies, the wake held in a family home is better attended than his funeral, which is held at the church.

The Metis Association. Significantly unimportant to the colony residents is the Alberta Metis Association. Although the provincial president is from this colony, only he and the local representative, plus a small minority, belong to the association. Most feel that it is not worth the dues, since "they haven't done anything yet".

Recreation. Recreational groups are the most important of the colony sodalities. The most important ones are groups formed for dances, bingo games, card games and baseball games.

Local men form the bands for the dances, which are held about ten times a year. "Jigging" type music and modern "pop" music are both popular, as are folk and square dancing. The village has several callers. The dances are popular and are attended by many, if only to watch, but some individuals do not attend because of their religious principles.

More exciting to people is bingo. Local bingo games are held periodically during the year and as often as once a week in the summer. Children as well as adults attend these games. The proceeds of the

games go to the baseball team, the Metis Association and the Roman Catholic Church. The games to support baseball are well attended and the proceeds high. Other games, supporting the Metis Association and the church, are not as well attended.

Certain households on the colony regularly hold card games in which a limited number of people are welcome, although participation is not by invitation. A few are limited to an extended family, but more cut across family lines. Some do not play cards for religious reasons and get publicly upset about the games. The most common game is "50 points", which is a form of rummy. Small amounts are bet for a game which lasts two or three hands. There are rumors that much money is exchanged during the games. However, it is usual that only 25 cents is bet on a game.

By far the most important sodality on the colony is the baseball team. It is the only activity in which members of all the large extended families are represented, as well as others. The baseball team is the only sodality on the colony around which a sense of community is felt. The community supports the team by profits from bingo games and from concessions at the ball games. Almost all available cars on the colony are filled to capacity, taking colony residents to the baseball tournaments. Tournaments are held almost every weekend during the summer. They play White teams and Indian teams, with as many as four or five games in one day. Women who accompany the team work in the concessions and form a cheering and heckling section in support of their team. In the face of the outside opponent the community is drawn together, and factionalism seems unimportant for this short time.

Political Structure of the Colony

The Alberta Department of Public Welfare and the Metis Rehabilitation Branch form the apex of the hierarchy to which the local council is subservient. The Metis Rehabilitation Branch (MRB) is represented on the colony by a resident supervisor. This supervisor is responsible for coordinating and overseeing work on the colony--cutting timber, building houses, breaking and clearing land, planting and harvesting colony hay meadows, care of colony livestock--plus handling the administration of wages and welfare payments. Thus, the supervisor holds a great deal of power over the colony residents. Furthermore, this supervisor has final veto power in the local council.

The local council and its functions are prescribed by the Metis Betterment Act. The council is composed of the local supervisor and four Metis residents. Two of the latter are appointed by the MRB, and two are elected by the colony adults. The local supervisor, in response to the demands of the MRB, makes most of the major decisions concerning the welfare of the residents and delegates lesser ones to the local council. Councilmen are appointed and elected on alternating years, and the councilman with the most seniority serves as chairman. Members of the large extended families are the ones elected to the council, since they have a large number of supporters.

About once every other month a community meeting is held, with the senior councilman serving as chairman. Members of each extended family are always represented, plus various other families. The meetings are generally well attended; often a bingo game follows the meeting. Usually the men sit or stand at the back of the hall together, while the women sit together on the benches. People come early to the

meetings and enjoy visiting. Family members generally vote as a block, taking cues from the men. Discussion and arguments are often lively, but usually a consensus is reached before voting takes place. Most of the decisions made result in recommendations to the MRB concerning the colony.

Male-Female Prestige

Implicit throughout the social structure is the relative dominance of the male over the female. Prestige comes from supporting one's family, being a good hunter or fisherman, being a good baseball player, and having goods to share or favors to offer. Being on the local council seems to be more a result of being prestigious rather than a source of pride in itself. All of these positions are not available to the female. She has few ways to distinguish herself and is expected to feed, clothe and tend to household tasks for her large family. Even the male child is not only served by his sisters, but also his mother.

SOCIAL STRUCTURES OF THE MAJOR KINSHIP GROUPS

This section will give a brief overview of each of the five major kinship groups found on the colony. Kinship, marriage, residence, communal and child rearing patterns for each will be described. This will serve as a background description of the families from which a major portion of the data in this thesis were gathered. It will also serve to show the diversity within the colony.

Throughout the thesis, synonyms have been substituted for actual names of people. The synonyms used, however, are names used by the Metis of northeastern Alberta, with the exception of surnames.

These are fictitious.

The Beavers

The Beaver extended family is composed of approximately 50 individuals divided into six nuclear families. They are the only extended family on the colony who can relate themselves historically to the "Red River Tradition". Their family name is readily associated with the Metis rebellion of the late 1800's, and the family seems proud of this heritage.

The original settlers of this family on the colony moved from a nearby Cree reserve in the 1930's. They settled at the top of a hill, near the shore of Lone Tree Lake about four miles from the community center. They resided in a large two storey log house. Hunting and fishing provided their subsistence. Almost all of the offspring of this family--mostly sons--have remained on the colony.

Today, this family, now nearing old age, resides in a frame house, newly constructed by the sons--still on top of the hill. The sons, five of them, reside with their families along the road that leads to the top of the hill. Their houses are within walking distance of each other and many close ties exist between the families.

Although each of the sons married from within the colony, no particular alliance has been formed with any other family. Two of the sons married from the Jensen family, with the others marrying from smaller, non-extended families. Thus, we see that the marriage pattern has been one of local (colony) endogamy and the residence pattern one of patrilocality.

Economically, the brothers and their father are cooperative--

hunting, fishing, farming and raising cattle together. One of the sons stated that "This place is more like a Hutterite colony than anything else." Often the women sew, pick berries or can together. Their children are often together and spend much time at their grandparents' house at the top of the hill.

The sons and their father speak Cree among themselves. Although most of the wives of the sons speak Cree, English is generally spoken in these homes. The younger generation knows some Cree, but they speak English among themselves.

The elder parents are very religious and active in an evangelical Protestant church, with a kinsman from off the colony serving as minister. The offspring of this family were raised in the traditions of this church, but as adults are less active in the church. Prayer meetings are held regularly in various family homes, however, and extended family members attend.

Their church does not encourage participation in many of the social activities that other colony members participate in, such as bingo, card games, and dances. However, the men of the Beaver family are active on the baseball team.

Politically, the family is a strong one on the colony, since they control a considerable number of votes. However, none has served as a member of the local council. In general terms, one would consider this extended family a rather self-sufficient one, not depending on the colony either socially or economically.

Patterns of child rearing within the Beaver family vary between the nuclear families. However, all of the parents tend to be less permissive with their children than in other extended families.

The fathers, all brothers raised in a relatively strict and religious home, play a somewhat more active role in disciplining their children than is found among other homes on the colony.

The Jensens

Stretched along a three mile dirt road leading to the center of the colony, reside Rose Jensen and five of her adult offspring and their families. Rose and her husband were among the early colony settlers. Her husband, the son of a Norwegian, is now deceased.

Rose lives in an aged two storey log house with one of her sons, who is separated from his White wife, and two of her grandchildren. Five of her other children (one has left the colony) have married spouses from other major families on the colony. Two of the three daughters live on the fringes of the Jensen neighborhood and their husbands cooperate economically with their own brothers. The other daughter lives close to her mother; her husband is a wage earner. Two of Rose's sons are wage earners and the third is disabled and supports his family from social allowance.

Thus, we see that this neighborhood is made up of six nuclear families--the families of three brothers and three sisters. The family does not cooperate economically, as four of the men are wage earners and two cooperate with the families on the other kinship line. These latter two families live in proximity to both the husbands' and the wives' families.

Although Rose speaks Cree, none of her offspring do. It is heard within some of the Jensen nuclear families, however, since some of their spouses speak Cree. The Jensens are Protestant, but are not active

in the church. Some of them have married Roman Catholics.

Politically, the Jensens do not act as a body and thus carry little weight. The men of the Jensen family do not generally participate in community affairs; however, their wives (the two living on the colony) are active in all social events. The Jensen women are also socially active, as are their spouses.

The family members often exchange favors, but are not dependent upon each other in any major way. The two related factors which seem most important in binding the families together is, first of all, their proximity, and second, the fact that their children form a play group. Out of the six families, the children of only two identify with another play group.

The six families vary in degrees of permissiveness in child control. Most tend toward the very permissive. The least permissive household is one in which a Jensen is married to a Beaver man. (However, relative to the Beavers, this family is by far the most permissive.) One of the Jensen men, married to a Larioux woman, has produced a family which holds more to White, middle-class values than perhaps any other family on the colony. All of the other households are quite permissive, including the one in which the grandmother serves in the mother role.

The Larioux

The Larioux extended family lives adjacent to the Jensens. All of them live within the boundaries of the village, except for one family. The extended family, living in proximity, is composed of the elder father, his five daughters and one son and their families. One of

the daughters, separated from her White husband, resides with her father with her two children. Thus, the family is composed of six households. The residence patterns indicate matrilocal features.

Three of the Larioux, two sisters and their brother, are married to three Rasmussen siblings. Another is married to the offspring of an early settler, and the last is married to a Jensen. The latter nuclear family lives at the point where the Jensen and the Larioux neighborhoods intersect.

Most of the males in this family (affinal and consanguinial) are disabled and support their families by social allowance. One of the affines, however, manages the village general store and is the most affluent on the colony. Two of the families raise some cattle and horses. Almost all of the men do some hunting and fishing. Although game is shared among the families, they are economically independent. Borrowing and sharing favors is common, however.

Socially and politically, the family acts as a unit and wields a great deal of power on the colony. The women are active in all social events and are often responsible for initiating them. One of the men (a Rasmussen) serves as head of the local council. Although the Rasmussen family is Protestant and the Larioux Roman Catholic, most of the children in these families are associated with the Catholic church.

Almost all of the men and the women in these families speak Cree; however, they generally speak it only among themselves and not to their children.

Particularly close ties exist between the Louis Jensen (married to a Larioux woman) family and Louis' brother's family, who lives across the street. The wife of the latter family closely

identifies with the Larioux women and is considered almost as a sister. The children in these two Jensen families have many age mates and are constant playmates. Other Jensen children and Larioux children are often a part of this play group. Only one other major extended family lives within the village boundaries, and the children from this family are sharply separated from the Jensen-Larioux play group.

The Larioux, like the Jensens, tend to be very permissive in controlling their children. The one exception--the Jensen married to a Larioux--has already been mentioned. It is this latter family that has produced a daughter who is the only high school graduate on the colony. She has now completed a teacher training course at the university.

The Lodens

Living in the most isolated part of the colony, and separated from the village by a lake, are the six Loden residences. We became acquainted with only three of the families, and therefore relatively little data was collected on them. The households consist of two senior members of the family and their children, two younger members and their families, plus two households of Loden women and their spouses and children. One of the Loden women and her family live in the village. Thus, there are six households. None of the Lodens married from the other large kinship groups, but chose spouses from the smaller families residing on the colony.

The men in this extended family cooperate economically by raising cattle and horses. To a large extent they are self-sufficient. Even the Loden living in the village with her family maintains one of the largest gardens on the colony. This garden is on a plot located

outside of the village. All of the men are active at hunting and fishing.

The Lodens tend to act politically as a body and carry considerable weight. A younger Loden narrowly lost an election for a seat on the council. This particular Loden has strong friendship ties with the Larioux and therefore has a good chance to be elected in the future.

Other than this one strong friendship tie, the Lodens generally do not align themselves with any other group on the colony. Most of the Lodens are rarely seen in the village, except as they pass through on the way to their homes.

Only a few participate in any community activities. The Loden woman living in town and one of her brothers and his wife participate in the United Church and are active in raising funds to build a church. The former is also active in the Alberta Metis Association and holds a secretarial position. Few others on the colony are active in this Association, however.

All of the Lodens and many of their spouses are Cree speakers. One of the women in the family indicated that "We speak a different brand of Cree around here. We can hardly understand some of the others" (contextually implying that the "others" were the Larioux, who have a French accent). Many of the children in this family speak Cree.

Little is known of the child rearing practices of these families. There are several indications that the parents have considerable control over their children, however. For example, none of the teen-agers are allowed to socialize in the village, which is reputed to be a place where one can get into trouble. The one Loden child who

attended a summer preschool already knew how to write his name, color and count. This is not usual in families who are permissive in controlling their children.

The Browns

The fifth major extended family on the colony is the Brown family. They are composed of fifteen nuclear families and reside in a large area along the southern boundary of the colony, stretching from the village to the highway--about three miles. This extended family moved from a single location to the colony between 1962 and 1964.

The senior members of the Brown family are two brothers, married to two sisters. One has six adult children who have moved to the colony, and the other has seven. Three from one family are married to three from the other family. Thus, there are three parallel first cousin marriages. All but one adult in these two families were married before moving to the colony. This one exception married a Jensen girl and moved off the colony.

The men in this extended family are unique on the colony, since most of them are skilled and many have held jobs in the city. Although some of the men in the Brown family raise cattle and horses, most hold skilled jobs such as bus driving and carpentry. Thus, each household is primarily independent concerning income.

However, in other ways this extended family is highly cooperative. The women, three of them affines as well as sisters, share appliances (irons, washers, etc.) and other household goods. They often share work of sewing, canning and baby tending. The men hunt and fish together and share the benefits.

The children of this extended family who reside in the town form a play group. Other cousins are often a part of this play group, since there is much visiting between family members.

Politically, the Browns form a strong, cooperative unit and have quickly risen to political power. One of the elder Browns has already been elected to the village council.

Socially, the Browns are active in the village. Members of the family attend the dances and the bingo games. The men are active on the baseball team.

Cree is a common language among the adults of this family. It is spoken in some of the homes, but their children are not fluent.

The family is not identified with any particular religious group, although some members are active Roman Catholics.

The child rearing patterns among these families tend to be permissive as those of the Jensen and Larioux families.

Other Families on the Colony

These five large, extended families account for approximately 75 percent of the colony population. The other 25 percent include small extended families (of two or three households), other nuclear families, and elders without children in the household.

There are about ten nuclear families that are related to no one else on the colony. These families share many characteristics.

Almost none of these families were among the early settlers, and neither the husband nor the wife is related to anyone else on the colony--or at least is not recognized as being related. Only two of these ten families reside within the village. The others reside in some

of the most isolated parts of the colony. Eight of these families--all large, with six to ten children--still reside in the two and three room log cabins that were among the first built on the colony. Other than these eight, only a very small minority still reside in such accommodations.

Most of the men in these families are disabled and support their families on social allowance. Many have worked hard most of their lives and look ten years or so older than their actual age. The majority hunt and fish to add to their subsistence.

These families are both physically as well as socially isolated. There is no one with whom they can cooperate. Only two of these independent families have established major friendships with which they act as fictive kin, with the children referring to the adults as aunt and uncle.

Generally, there is no one from whom they can borrow or ask favors of. The women have no one with whom they can share household tasks and no one they can rely on for baby tending. In these families a heavy burden of household tasks falls on the oldest children.

Cree is spoken in almost all of these households as a first language, with English being second. Many of the small children do not know English.

These families are generally not active in any religious or social activity on the colony. Often they have no reliable transportation and no babysitter.

The following is an example of a typical type of role that a member of one of these families may play in a community activity.

Mrs. _____ attended the wake of the

Larioux boy. Visitors to the house chanted and sang religious songs in Cree and English. Immediate family members greeted visitors at the door. Consanguinial female kinsmen served sandwiches and coffee throughout the night. Mrs. _____ spent most of the night washing plates and coffee cups.

Child rearing patterns for these families are among the most permissive on the colony. Much of the socialization of the children is done by older siblings. Siblings form the play group and even the children of the two families residing in town are not regularly part of another play group.

Conclusion

From this description of the social structure it seems evident that in most ways the colony should not be viewed as a community or group of cooperating residents. The dominant social institution is the extended family, and few sodalities exist that cut across these family lines. Nuclear families rely on kinsmen for social and economic well-being. Unrelated families find themselves both physically and socially isolated on the colony. A high degree of cooperation exists within the extended family, but little between extended families.

THE LIFE CYCLE

Although all individuals biologically pass through the same stages in the life cycle, it is the society that dictates which stages are to be socially recognized. Each stage is marked by a shift in status of the individual. Some shifts are formalized by a rite of passage. On Beaver Metis Colony, most are not so formalized. Seven

stages are recognized on the colony, although all are not considered socially important. These stages are: the fetal stage, infancy, childhood, school age, young adult, adult, and old age. The social significance of each of these will be described.

Fetal Stage

This stage is biologically marked by conception and birth, and socially is not considered very important. The working, eating, and social habits of the expectant mother change very little from non-pregnancy to pregnancy. Toward the end of her term she may be warned to be careful on stairs, about climbing, and about lifting heavy loads. However, few heed this advice from others. If the pregnant woman belongs to a large, extended family, and if it is her first child, she may be given a baby shower. Until about five years ago, almost all babies were born at home, with certain women and a few men being especially skilled at mid-wifery. Now, all babies are born in the hospital of the nearby town.

If anyone sees the pregnant woman through the labor period, it is a female relative--usually a sister or sister-in-law. It is not customary for the husband to visit his wife during confinement, and he rarely accompanies her either to or from the hospital unless he owns a car or truck. If he does not, a male kinsman acts as driver; otherwise the resident supervisor makes the drive to town, or a cab is hired. Confinement for the woman is usually about five days. Other kinsmen or older children care for young ones at home. Often the husband eats at the home of his parents while his wife is gone.

The arrival of the new born at home is marked with excitement,

especially by children and female kinsmen. Men, and especially the father, scarcely seem to notice.

Infanthood

The second stage of the life cycle is that of infanthood. It begins at birth and very generally ends when the infant is walking well. The infant is considered helpless and knowledgeless. He is infallible, since "He doesn't know better." He is expected to learn from his own experience.

During this stage, the infant is socialized almost entirely by the mother. Older daughters or female relatives may perform some of the household tasks while the infant is very young. No particular differences were noticed in the treatment of male babies and female babies.

Hospital personnel seem to encourage the mothers to bottle feed their infants. Often, the few who do breast feed, and the mothers on the colony consider this preferable, have difficulty in producing adequate milk. This is most likely because of their own inadequate diet. Infants eat mashed or pre-masticated table food early. Little commercial baby food is used on the colony. At night the infant sleeps with his parents or he sleeps swaddled in a hammock over their bed. A few have small cribs or cradles. During the day, the infant is placed in a bed, crib, or hammock near the center of family activity--which is usually the cooking and eating area. Young children, who may express hostility toward the new infant, are not allowed to be near him. Often the infant is held by an adult female kinsman or by an older sister.

Men and boys pay little attention to the infant, particularly during the early months. As the baby becomes less dependent upon the

mother, male members of the family seem to show more attention to the new family member. Perhaps then the latter is seen as less threatening to the somewhat privileged position of the male.

The infant receives much indulgence, at first from female family members, and then later from the male members. All efforts are made to soothe a crying baby. He is given a pacifier or fed on demand. He is often the center of family attention and is held, talked to, sung to, and played with. Usually no special intonation or language is used for the infant. Nonsense syllables are sometimes used, however, especially in songs. The infant is part of all that the family does, even if he only observes. If the family has special food, such as cake or pop, the infant always receives a share. Children often vie for attention from the infant.

The only formalized ceremony for the infant is that of baptism. Although almost all infants are baptized, it is not a significant social affair. A more significant ritual for the infant, and one that often serves as a rite of passage from infancy to childhood, is that of hospitalization.

Few infants escape hospitalization, which is usually for respiratory or digestive ailments. Confinement is generally for long periods, commonly up to three weeks. This is often the result of lack of communication between the hospital and the parents, since there are no visitation privileges. This is a very harsh period for the infant. It is marked by total separation from his family and socialization by White nurses. Indulgences come abruptly to an end. Breast fed babies are weaned to a bottle and often bottle fed babies to a cup at meal time. Babies, which are almost all Metis, are allowed to cry for hours

before falling asleep. The satisfaction of their needs becomes highly routinized.

When the infant returns home, he is greatly pitied and given compensatory indulgence. Often gifts await his arrival home. Although the infant may be well when he returns home, the parents blame the hospital for making their baby thin and pale. One parent commented in this context, "What have they done to my baby?"

After this experience, the status of the infant is somewhat changed. He is considered more knowledgeable, since he has been out "into the world". He is also less dependent upon his parents. It is during this period that the infant learns to drop his eyes in the presence of a White stranger.

Although the cultural conditioning in the hospital is anticipatory for conditioning in the public schools at a later age, it is discontinuous with the conditioning of the next stage. Generally, however, the cultural conditioning in infancy may be seen as continuous with that of childhood.

Childhood

The third socially recognized stage in the life cycle is that of childhood. It is that period that begins sometime around the time that the infant learns to walk and ends when the child begins school at age six. It is a stage marked by freedom, independence and privileges for the child. It is also a period in which sex roles are differentiated, with the male child being given more freedom and privileges. The female child learns various household tasks and has some baby tending responsibilities for a younger sibling. It is during this stage that

the child becomes quite self-reliant and sure of himself. He has learned most of the important aspects of his culture.

The child is socialized increasingly less by the mother and more by the father and older siblings. The father introduces the child to a larger social world by taking the child with him on his daily rounds. In this way the child learns to perform errands for other family members. During childhood, the boys are allowed to roam within a socially defined neighborhood. Often this area includes a wooded area. The child often visits the homes of his grandparents and cousins. The child plays in neighborhood games made up of cousins and siblings. This kind of social conditioning in childhood is continuous with the conditioning in adulthood, but is very discontinuous with the conditioning of the next phase--that of school age.

School Age

Almost nothing in the child's experience so far has prepared him for the important rite of passage from childhood--that of entrance into school at age six. No gradual transition takes place between this stage and the former one. One morning the child is awakened, made to dress, eat and board a bus that will take him thirty miles away to a community that is dominated by Whites. He will be gone for eight and one-half hours every day. Quite suddenly the child is exposed to a culture quite different from his own. To some extent his older siblings have prepared him for this experience, but their experience, almost by definition, has been a difficult one.

Entrance into school places the child in two new social positions--one at home and one at school. At home the child has

additional rights and duties. He may now attend evening community functions, for example, and he has more household tasks to perform. Particularly the girl must help at home. Most school aged children do not have regular duties to perform, but are expected to help on demand.

During this stage, the school aged child spends most of his time outside of school and in school with his peers. On the colony, he is socialized more by older siblings and cousins than by his parents. Limited interaction takes place between school aged children and their parents. Most of the parents of these children went to school on the colony, which ended at grade six. Because of overcrowding, many were forced to drop out before this. Thus, parents and children have not shared the same educational experience which increases this lack of communication.

At school the child is socialized by White peers and teachers. The conditioning that the Metis child receives at school is quite contrary to that he has received at home on the colony. At home he is expected to be self-reliant and independent and to make his own decisions. At school he is expected to be dependent upon the system, to follow rules, and to accept the teacher as authority. At home his peers are important authorities. At home the child is expected not to be inquisitive, but to listen and observe, then arrive at his own conclusions. The culture is learned rather than being formally taught. At school the culture is formally taught by adults. There, children are encouraged to ask questions and accept the answers on authority. Survival at home is dependent upon cooperation, while at school competition is the norm. At home the child is socially adept and confident. He holds a worthy and somewhat privileged social position.

Because of his schooling, he is considered knowledgeable. On the other hand, at school the child is socially awkward and often shy. He is made to feel unworthy and underprivileged. Various kinds of formal tests reveal his lack of real readiness for school, and he is held responsible for this situation.

Thus, the school aged child is subject to two different sets of cultural conditioning. One is continuous from his infancy, and the other comes as a somewhat traumatic rite of passage into the White community. No rite of passage marks the end of this stage in the life cycle, such as graduation from school. The child leaves school as soon as he reaches the legal age for doing so, age 16.

Young Adulthood

When the teen-ager leaves school, he is then ready to pursue the roles of adulthood--those of raising and supporting a family and gaining prestige for himself and his family. No social significance was placed on either male or female puberty; now the teen-ager is considered a young adult. He does not achieve full adult status until he establishes a residence of his own.

It is during this young adult period that the teen-ager closely identifies with his same sex parent. The daughter shares baby tending and household tasks with her mother. She may have a child of her own to care for along with her mother's. Jobs are scarce in this area and the young men have difficulty in finding jobs. They may work for the colony by clearing land, or on the construction of houses. Or, they may work with other males in their family if they form a cooperating self-sufficient group.

Young adult males generally choose a mate from the colony. Until the young couple establish a residence of their own, their relationship is very brittle. The relationship may be formalized by a church wedding, may become established as one of common law, or may dissolve. In the latter case, if there are children, the mother cares for them in the home of her parents. Of the six young adult relationships observed, no particular pattern evolved. One young male chose a wife from a nearby Indian reserve and brought her to his parents' home to live "as a surprise". In another case, a young man came to live at the home of his wife's parents and worked for her father for the summer. Although she was pregnant, the relationship eventually dissolved. Young adults from two large extended families married formally in a large church wedding and moved away from the colony. They did not have a child for several years. Another young couple, each living with the husband's parents, planned to set up residence of their own when they had accumulated some furniture. In another case, a young mother and her child lived with her parents, while the father of the child lived with his. Although he was teased about working for the girl's father to support his child, he did not. He eventually found a job outside of the colony, but still resided with his parents. In such cases as the latter, the young mother usually finds a permanent spouse, and her child resides with them. Usually by the time a couple have one or more children, the young father can support his family in a separate residence.

Adulthood

When a couple establish their own residence and family, they

have achieved full adulthood status. During this period, relationships between spouses are very stable. Almost every residence with children includes both a mother and a father. The few which do not are those with White fathers who have left their families.

Prestige for the adult male comes from being able to support his family, being a good hunter or fisherman, having goods to share such as game or a car, and being a member of the baseball team. Most means of achieving prestige are not available to the woman. She normally has a large family to care for and household tasks to perform without the aid of modern household conveniences.

It is during the adult stage of the life cycle that male and female sex differences are socially the most emphasized. Each has his own realm of activity and work. They do not generally work cooperatively, but side by side, each accomplishing his or her own tasks. Men talk to men and women to women. Publicly they show no affection for the other. And yet, they appear to be bound together in a very stable relationship.

Transition from this stage comes gradually; as the means for gaining prestige become inaccessible, the man is considered old. The woman is old when her children have left school.

Old Age

The final stage in the life cycle is that of old age. When a man can no longer support his family, when he has no goods to share, when he is too old to play baseball and hunt and fish, his status as an adult is past. Usually hunting and fishing are the last of these activities in which he participates.

Many men are physically old from hard labor before the legal age for a pension at 62. In this case they receive some aid in the form of social allowance. Boys and young adult kinsmen chop fire wood and run errands for those who are unable to do so. The individual in this last stage of the life cycle remains as independent as he is able. Almost all maintain their own residence and a small garden. Most men do some hunting for birds and fishing.

Although the means of achieving prestige are no longer available to those of old age, many--especially men--are ascribed prestige by their families. Some stand in an almost patriarchal position in them.

Death is marked by an important rite of passage--the wake. It is held in his own home or that of a kinsman. He is dressed in his best clothing, and friends and kinsmen pay their respects. Religious songs are sung in both Cree and English. Coffee and sandwiches are served throughout the night. The following day the funeral is held, although this is not as important a rite as the wake. Burial is in the colony cemetery, on a hill near the churches.

In summary, there are seven stages in the life cycle of the Metis living on the colony. These stages have been described as culturally directed shifts in social position. Few are marked by a rite of passage, and the transition into all but one is gradual. The prime exception is that of entrance into school. This stage is also the only one in which the cultural conditioning is not continuous from birth. Agents of socialization vary in each stage, and sex differentiation made in the early stages continues throughout the life cycle.

CHAPTER II

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE SIX YEAR OLD IN THE HOME

The two basic social positions for the preschooler in the home are offspring and sibling. These will be considered in terms of the rights and duties associated with each. In instances where the rights and duties of the offspring or sibling differ on the basis of sex or relative age, these will be indicated. The rights and duties of the social position of offspring override those of sibling and will be considered first. Most of the rights and duties that are applicable to the preschool child are also applicable to other children between the ages of approximately two years and adolescence.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OVER PHYSICAL NEEDS

For the child the most significant rights, in terms of his own behavior, are those that the child has over his own physical needs and desires. With some exceptions, it is the child who decides what and when he eats, when and where he urinates or defecates, when he needs to rest and what is or is not safe for him to do. This pattern by and large holds for the two year old as well as the ten year old. The following examples of role behavior point to the basic trust that the adult shows in the ability of the child to determine and fulfill his own needs. Parents may become angry or upset if the child's needs inconvenience him as an adult, or they may feel some conflict if the child's own judgments are counter to his, but these emotions are simply expressed with little attempt on the part of the parents to change the

behavior of the child.

In the following outline we can see the roles of the children and their rights over their own physical needs. The role of the mother is explicit.

It is about 9:00 a.m. and the three children, Billy, age six; Wally, age seven; and Rose, age nine, all appear in the kitchen about the same time. Their father is already at work in the pasture and their mother is still asleep with the baby. The children cut thick slices of homemade bread for themselves, and spread them with lard and strawberry jam. Their father has already made the tea and it sits on the woodstove steaming hot. All three have a cup of it with ample sugar and canned milk added.

The boys take their swim suits and leave the house, heading in the direction of the creek. Sandra recombs her short black hair, gets her swim suit and leaves the house, meeting two female cousins on the road. They also head for the creek, and remain until noon.

For lunch their mother has prepared macaroni with tomato sauce and tea. Bread and sausage are also on the table. Wally and Rose return from swimming and hurriedly fix sausage sandwiches. Rose quietly eats her sandwich and a large helping of macaroni. Their parents have already eaten and are busy conversing with relatives who live down the road. Wally, taking his sandwich and his swimsuit with him, leaves the house and heads for the creek. Rose finishes eating and crosses the road to her cousin's house. Soon the two girls are seen heading for the creek. Little conversation was held between the children and their parents--only conversation necessary for passing out the food was heard. No one asks about Billy, who doesn't return home until around 5:00 with the others.

A rainstorm is blowing in from the north. The children troop in and head for the

kitchen. Their mother is busy sewing and their father has not yet returned from the pasture. The children find two remaining pieces of the baby's birthday cake. Rose takes one piece and begins quickly eating it while Billy and Wally argue over the remaining piece. "Shut up you kids!", their mother yells at them. The boys divide the cake and begin eating it from the bowl. Wally gets a spoon and the two boys eat most of it, stopping when their mother puts the beans on the table. Wally grabs for his plate and his mother slaps his hand hard. "You piggybrat, just wait until I set it down!" May, his mother, continues yelling, "When I cook nobody is here to eat. When I don't cook, it's 'I want this, I want that.' Shit! Now eat, before I break this broom over your head!" It is quiet, and the three children finish.

Rose breaks the silence. "Wally dives right in the deep water, right in the bullrushes." May has returned to her sewing but replies, "Just like a goddamned frog, you live in that damn water!" Billy interrupts, "Any potatoes?" "Damn kids, how do you expect to get enough without bread," May replies as she leaves her sewing and puts the bread on the table. She returns to her sewing, muttering to herself, "Damn kids, beans, macaroni, and cake, and now bread." The children finish eating, and the rain has stopped.

Wally and Rose go outside, but Billy remains. "I want an egg." May ignores him. The children's father returns home and the two adults eat what is left of the macaroni and beans. An egg is frying on the woodstove. May yells, "Billy, get in here!" He comes in silently and eats his egg and returns outside to play.

The children play at their cousins' house until after dark. Rose comes in first and flops into a chair. She picks up a worn comic book and re-reads it. Soon Billy and Wally come in. Billy gets out the bread and lard. Wally gets the jam and they fix sandwiches. They help themselves to the tea on the stove. Rose joins them.

The children converse among themselves. Rose returns to her comic, and the boys head for the bedroom, where they strip off their pants, revealing their swim trunks. As if to be ready for the next day, they sleep in their trunks. They crawl in between the blankets on the flattened couch that they share for sleeping. They laugh and tickle each other for a while, and then their father yells, "You boys shut up in there." It is quiet afterwards. Rose leaves the kitchen and goes into the bedroom. It is 10:00 and the children are all asleep.

From this long description of the children's activities for the day, we can see that the parents expect the children to care for themselves. The mother appears to be sure that the children can take care of themselves. She does not worry that they will not eat, or that they will not return home. When they are hungry, they will come home. When a storm is approaching, they will not linger at play. When they are tired, they will go to bed.

Although parents indicate a great deal of concern about the children playing at the creek, those of school age are not forbidden to go, nor are the children issued any warning, nor are they given swimming instruction. The children learn to take care of themselves in the five feet deep water, and do not venture into it until they have taught themselves to swim in the shallower parts. No children have ever drowned in the thirty years that the families have resided in that area.

Although these rights are generally extended to all children, there is a strictly enforced rule against preschoolers going to the creek. The following excerpt from field notes is from a conversation between two mothers who have preschoolers. They are discussing a place that is considering having a nursery school on a year-round basis.

"I'd send mine all year long. That way she wouldn't be down at the creek with the others." The other mother agreed, "I'd rather have mine in school than galloping around and me wondering where she is. I can't know, I live way out there; I'll wonder if she's down at the creek. Boy, that's one time I'll warm their hind ends if they go down to that creek." The first mother replied, "Me, I'm scared to have them near that water."

Parents themselves do not go near the swimming hole and do not want their children to go until they think that they are old enough to take care of themselves. Usually the children are first allowed to go to the swimming hole the first summer after they have started school (Billy, age six, in the previous example).

An increasing fear for the parents concerning their pre-schoolers' safety is that of playing in the road. Since more and more cars are coming to the village, and fast driving is becoming a teen-age sport, the roads are no longer as safe as when only teams of horses were used. Adults do not concern themselves with school-age children playing ball or jumping rope in the road, but their concern is for the pre-schoolers who often walk or play in the road. This presents a point of conflict for many parents, since they feel that their children have a right to "roam" and in some ways the road is a desirable place for them to play. First of all, it is cleared, and much of the land surrounding some houses is not. Secondly, many of the parents can view their small children at play from the house if they are playing in the road. Otherwise the children could not be seen. Some of the parents are not aware of the danger for their small children, since they live away from the road. Then, other parents may gossip:

That Roland (age four) is going to get

killed by a car someday. I don't know why Mary (his mother) lets him roam like that. Just the other day someone said they saw him way down by (about a half-mile from home). He was all by himself, just walking around.

Although this example and the previous ones concerning the swimming hole seem to indicate that the children have the right to go most anywhere they wish, this is not the case and will be elaborated further in the section on rights and duties within the neighborhood. The point is, instead, that children have a right to decide for themselves what is or is not safe. The child is expected to learn safety by experience, generally, and not by verbal admonition. For example, a toddler may be close to the hot woodstove.

Bertha gets up to move Marvin away from the stove, but the father reminds her, "If he gets burned once, he'll remember to stay away from it."

In another case

A two year old had precariously stacked a small chair on top of a hobby horse and was prepared to stand on top of it all in order to reach the hook on the screen door. The mother commented, "That child is going to kill herself yet before she learns."

Parents are almost never heard warning their children to "be careful", or "watch out". Thus, because parents give the children this right to decide what is or is not safe, the children seem extremely self-confident about their bodies and exhibit few fears related to physical acts.

Small children of two to four years are often seen climbing fences, walking on railings, climbing high ladders, and even on the roof. One four year old looked longingly at his six year old cousin and

seven year old brother as they climbed up a high ladder to get on the barn roof. But he only looked and did not follow them. His father looked on with no comment.

The choice to go up the ladder or not belonged to the child. He did not need to be warned to "be careful".

In delineating the rights of the child over his own body, we have seen examples of children's eating, sleeping and safety patterns. Continuing this same theme, we view two other kinds of behavior.

During the course of the day, when the urge to urinate or defecate is felt, the child relieves himself by the side of the road or in the field where he is playing. Especially the boy makes little effort to conceal himself; however, the girl will generally look for a nearby bush. If they are very near their home, they will use their outhouse, but these offer little privacy, since many are without doors. Boys usually prefer the yard and girls the outhouse. Children are never questioned about these matters. Although a three year old may have an occasional accident, and may receive a sharp smack on the buttocks for his mistake, enuresis is rare. By the age of two, most children are "toilet trained". A mother or sister may accompany a three year old to the outhouse "to help him with his clothes", but generally they care for themselves. At night, and in the winter, a large can inside the house provides the necessary facilities.

Even when the child is sick, the parents do not interfere with the child's right to know what is best for his own body.

Wally wakes up in the night vomiting and with diarrhea. His mother is up several times in the night with him. By morning he seems to feel better, eats a bowl of dry puffed wheat for breakfast, but soon

vomits again. He leaves the house, heading up the hill to play. No one is home, so he soon returns and flops on the couch. He sleeps for about an hour and wakes up fussing for a soda pop. His father brings him one from the nearby store and Wally quickly drinks it and goes out to play. About an hour later he returns looking quite flushed in the face. He goes into the bedroom and falls asleep. When he wakes up his father takes him a cup of tea. He drinks it and goes outside again to play. He is gone for several hours, returning for supper. He eats beans and a lettuce and onion sandwich. After dinner he slumps on the couch and is soon on the bed asleep.

In less than an hour he is awake again and goes down the road to watch television at Pete's. He comes home around ten o'clock and goes to bed without his usual bread and tea. In the morning he has bread and tea for breakfast and heads for the swimming hole as usual. He does this in spite of his mother's previous warning: "No swimming tomorrow; you're too sick today."

Even the four year old is given this right:

Roland comes in from play and his mother asks him if he wants to take a nap. "No," he answers. "Then go outside and play." "No," he replies again. "Do you need an aspirin?" (Roland has an open head wound from falling from a tree.) "No, I'm cold." He gets his jacket and goes outside to play.

The two year old may refuse his offered nap.

Marvin is fussing so his mother carries him to her bed and lays down with him. She pats him and sings quietly to him. She punctuates her singing with the command, "Go to sleep." But Marvin only relaxes for ten minutes or so and without sleeping gets off the bed. He goes back to his play as before, but ceases his fussing. His mother gets off the bed and resumes her activity without further comment.

The preschooler has not yet experienced the morning infringements upon this right in the rushed process of the child's getting ready for school in time to catch the bus. It is indeed a rude awakening for the six year old when he starts school and must awake at a fixed hour, eat breakfast and get dressed, as well as fix his lunch. His mother may help him in the process, but this is often not welcomed by the child. Much yelling and threatening is heard in an effort to get the child to the bus on time. It is during the summer months that the child can revert to caring for himself, at his leisure, as the preschooler does.

Thus, we see an attitude on the parents' part that it is the child's right to grow physically in a natural way--without strong coercion or guidance. Parents have only limited rights to interfere. Children will naturally eat, sleep, find protection, and will learn from their experiences with danger. It is the parents' duty to provide clothing, food, warmth and safe surroundings for the child, but it is the child's right to refuse or accept them according to the child's needs. Parents do not seem ego-involved in providing for the child and, therefore, do not seem offended if their offers are refused.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OVER EMOTIONAL NEEDS

For the Metis child, we find that his social-emotional development is more subject to parental controls than is his physical development. It is primarily during the preschool years that the child learns to control his emotions and becomes a sociable being.

Since adults consider the preschool child as an unknowing being, they expect him to remain quiet in their presence. The child is

expected to learn by observing and listening in the presence of adults.

That the preschool child is considered as an unknowing being may be seen from the comment made that when a child misbehaves in a minor way, he will be told to "Smarten up!" This appears to imply that a child misbehaves because he has not yet learned the correct behavior.

The child is expected to learn by listening. Speaking prematurely only reveals his ignorance. Furthermore, idle conversation even among adults is not common. The child is expected to observe this and follow his parents' example. We see in the following example of adult behavior that silence may well be a comfortable situation. A visit with a friend may constitute sitting quietly and drinking tea.

Mabel knocks on the door and May invites her in. Mabel sits in the comfortable chair while May moves to the stove and puts on a fresh pot of tea. While the tea is brewing May sits across from Mabel but neither exchange conversation. May asks, "Want some tea?" Mabel replies, "Please." May pours two cups and sets the sugar and canned milk on the table. Each helps herself. They sit together for nearly twenty minutes, completely relaxed and drinking their tea. About ten minutes after Mabel has finished her tea, she stands and leaves as quietly as she arrived. May gets up and pours another cup of tea for herself.

When an adult is in a new situation, as in the presence of a stranger, his response is the same. He listens and observes before speaking. This does not necessarily mean that the individual is shy. It is as if he were gathering his emotional bearings as well as establishing a feeling tone with the stranger. The child is expected to learn this as a preschooler.

For the child to speak prematurely among adults is to reveal

his "stupidness". Nor is the child expected to ask questions. If he is observant and patient, he will learn.

Billy, age five, is eating a sandwich at the table. "It's gonna rain; huh, Mom?" She replies, "Such stupidity. Shut up and finish eating."

The child is expected to learn by observing for himself.

Raymond, age five, asks at the table, "Does this fish have bones in it?" Everyone laughs. His mother answers, "Do you think fish all of a sudden don't have bones?"

Children often ask questions about their participation in coming events, but are generally not given direct answers from their parents. Parents usually do not know in advance if money or transportation will be available--perhaps they will not know until the last minute. Thus, children in time learn not to anticipate future events. Perhaps this serves to save them from disappointment.

There is much excitement and talk among the adults and children concerning the coming baseball tournament to be held in the nearby town. The village team is playing and almost everyone seems to want to go. However, since only a minority of the families have their own transportation and the ball team has priority for space in the cars and trucks, many will not attend.

Bobby and Tommy (ages six and seven) are baseball fans and talk much about the game between themselves. Several times they have asked if they will be going. Each time they are told, "None of your business," or "Shut up," or they are simply ignored.

On Sunday, the day of the ball game, they still do not know if they are going. Finally Billy says, "Gee whiz, are we gonna go or not?" No one answers him. Their mother is busy sponging off the baby

and their father is putting on a clean shirt. The boys are called, "Get in here and put on clean jeans!" The boys rush in and change clothes. Tommy yells in excitement, "We're going!" Their mother replies, "Shut up, you kids; who said we're going." Their mother moves to the dishpan and begins washing dirty dishes. A truck pulls up in front of the house and honks. John, a friend of the family, comes to the door and asks if they want to go to the ball game. Within ten minutes the family are all in the truck and on their way to the game.

Thus, we see that children learn to accept whatever comes, when it comes, if it comes at all. It is fruitless to question about the future, because the future is unpredictable.

Children are not to bring their complaints to parents. Parents expect children to solve their own social problems among their peers. A common response for parents to make when children bring their grievances to them is "Go and play." This is perhaps the most frequent verbal command that the child gets from his parents during the course of the day. This is the parents' response to tattling or to complaints about other children, including siblings.

We can see that there is very little extended verbal communication between children and their parents. What communication there is from the parents is usually in the form of orders without explanation.

Three other methods are employed by parents in controlling social and emotional responses of the child. A sharp, usually unexpected slap; a threat of danger from a source outside of the family; or merely ignoring the child all serve toward socializing the child. Examples of these will be seen as we turn to a description of the

emotional rights and expectations for the preschool child.

The most significant aspect of the preschooler's emotional development is that one rarely hears the preschooler cry. Since they generally eat and rest on demand, they seldom have reason to cry. When a child does cry, it is usually from anger or frustration rather than from physical discomfort or pain. Even the two year old seldom cries from being hurt.

Marvin, age two, is hammering three inch nails with his father's hammer. He holds five nails at once and hits at them. With each forward thrust he inevitably hits one of them. After a short time he hits his thumb with the hammer. He jumps back, lays the hammer down and looks at his thumb. He looks as if he might cry, but he does not. His parents are nearby and have been watching him hammer. They make no spontaneous effort to comfort him. Marvin picks up the remaining nails and takes them to his father. He goes back for the hammer and also hands that to his father. His father reaches down and picks up Marvin, hugging him affectionately.

In the following incident, this same child--a year younger--eleven months old--is playing and is hurt. We can see that the mother in this case reacts somewhat differently toward the child.

Marvin falls hard out the doorway while he is trying to unhook the screen door. He loses his balance and falls out of the door on his head. He hollers loudly. His mother rushes over to him, but does not pick him up. "Holy Cah-ristmas!", she yells. She looks down at him and says, "If you weren't so damned clumsy, this wouldn't happen. Now shut up. Just shut up right now." Marvin continues crying very hard now and does not get up. His mother leans down and picks him up. She holds him close to her body and says quietly, "Mamma's baby." He continues crying. "Look at those horses," she says, holding him up to the window. The crying

goes on. She holds him tightly again and sings to him. He is quiet for a few seconds, but begins to cry again. "So small, Baby. Now, Baby. Now, Baby," she croons to him. "Smallest one." She whistles a Western tune to him and he cries in a low hum. Suddenly her voice changes and she threatens him, "Where's pup? Puppy will come and get Marvin." She talks in a sharp voice and puts Marvin on the floor. He has quit crying now and crawls toward the doorway.

One can see that the mother makes some effort to make the child quit crying before comforting him. Then she comforts him and finally threatens him until his crying ceases. She does not have to punish him if he does not stop; the dog will. She does not have to tell him not to go near the doorway. She trusts that he will learn from his experience.

The fact that children generally play away from their parents means that children usually do not expect to be comforted when they are hurt. We see this in the following example.

Roland, age four, is in the road with his tricycle. He sees a car coming so he is making a quick attempt at getting his tricycle off the road in a hurry. He is dragging the tricycle sideways, and the wheel catches on a large rock. The tricycle falls over, knocking him down in the process. Roland falls on a large scab on the side of his face. He puckers his face and takes a deep breath. He does not cry, however, but picks up his tricycle and heads toward his house. He goes over to his tire and rope swing and begins slowly swinging himself.

One finds that the preschooler is more likely to cry out of anger or frustration than pain, however.

A truck pulls up in front of the house and Joe comes in to ask if anyone would like to go to the nearby town with him to get supplies. Only the adults and the seven year old are awake and dressed. It is

decided that the mother and her son would go, leaving the father with the baby; Rose, the nine year old; and Billy, the six year old. Just as the two are ready to leave, Rose and Billy come sleepily out of the bedroom. They are told that they cannot go because they are not ready. The two of them begin crying as the mother and son leave. Even after the truck is out of sight, Billy continues yelling, "Wanna Go!", and crying loudly. Rose goes back to bed and sobs for half an hour or so and finally falls asleep. Billy continues yelling and making siren-like sounds. After about twenty minutes of this behavior, their father, who has been rocking the baby back to sleep, yells, "Billy, shut your big mouth!" Billy continues making the siren noise for another ten minutes and finally his father yells sternly, "Shut up, right now!" Billy quits hollering but sobs quietly for another ten minutes or so and then gets up and puts on the rest of his clothes. His father fixes bannock (Indian biscuits) and tea for him and he goes out to play.

We notice that there is a considerable amount of tolerance on the part of the father. The children cry for over half an hour--apparently until they are exhausted.

Roland, age four, displays his temper as his father drives past him in the truck. Roland usually goes with his father to get water from the creek, but this time he is left behind. Roland throws himself down in the road and wails loudly. His mother looks out the door at him and goes back inside. His father has left. Roland kicks his feet wildly and then gets up. He is still crying. He gets his tricycle, stops crying, and rides toward his house.

These parents have ignored their child's behavior. This is a common response to tantrums. By the time children reach school age, temper tantrums are rare. Parents seem to consider tantrums natural in small children. Also, we see that the child is expected to accept the

situation as it is--he cannot always have his way. He cannot always go to town or in the truck.

Like other aspects of the preschooler's emotional development, some rather clear patterns emerged from the data concerning the child's rights toward acting aggressively. Children, especially boys, are encouraged to be aggressive, but only when provoked by someone not considered to be in their group (a non-friend or non-kinsman). We can see the parents' attitudes concerning their son's lack of aggressiveness.

Billy Jensen, age five, is playing in the area generally considered as the play area for the children of the Brown family. Usually he does not play there, but in his own neighborhood, with other Jensens or children whose parents are friends of his parents.

After being gone from home for about an hour he comes walking down the road. His face is rather red and he is holding his shirt away from his neck. Rose, his sister, yells to her parents, "Billy got hurt with the rope!" Billy stops by the front fence around his house still holding the coiled rope. May, his mother, comments with concern in her voice, "A rope burn, that's the worst kind. There was that boy from _____ who got cancer right there on the neck from a rope burn." And then yelling she says, "Tell that bugger to get in here." She opens the door and yells at Billy to come in. He answers "no", and she repeats the command. He comes in and goes over to play with the baby. May goes over to Billy and examines his neck. "You stupe, why don't you play in your own yard!" His father goes to the medicine cabinet and gets out the salve. Now his father begins yelling at him along with his mother. Meanwhile, they are both liberally applying the salve to his neck. "You got your own yard to play in. Don't you know no better?" "Why did you let him do this to you, anyway?" May repeats her

husband's question. Meanwhile, Billy begins crying harder and harder as they rub the salve into his neck and continue yelling at him "Just shut up. You had no business being down there and letting that kid do this to you. You'll learn." Billy continues crying, but less hard. He is told to shut up. He becomes quieter and lays on the couch for a few minutes. He quits crying and goes outside.

From this we can see that Billy had no right to be where he was; secondly, he had no right to let the boy hurt him; and thirdly, he has no right to cry over something that was considered to be his own fault.

In the following examples, from the same family, we see the mother encouraging her son to be aggressive. In both examples, the aggression is toward someone considered as an outsider.

Sam drops by to visit the family. He is a friend of the family, but it has been a long time since he has visited. Marvin, the baby (age two), does not remember him. Sam picks Marvin up and begins talking to him. Marvin grins shyly. Sam begins making gentle, playful pokes at Marvin's arm. Marvin turns away and does not look at Sam. Sam begins gently tickling Marvin. Marvin looks at the floor with a very straight face. Sam continues provoking him, this time blowing on his neck. Marvin does not move away. In fact, he doesn't move at all. May, his mother, finally says, "I'm surprised he doesn't throw something at you. Whenever old man Williams teases him, Marvin really gets mad. The other day he really clobbered him with an ash tray. He threw it right at him." Everyone laughed, recalling the incident. When Sam turned to leave, and was just outside the front door, Marvin stuck his tongue in the direction of Sam, who had already left. May chuckled and said, "That's my man," while looking fondly at her little son.

In the following example, the mother seems to be well aware of

what her son is doing, but since this is a somewhat unwelcome guest, she primarily ignores his behavior, gently calling him one time.

Mrs. Bellford, who has low social standing on the colony, has hung her clothes to dry on her neighbor's clothesline. She has gathered in her clothes and is resting on a soft chair. No one is paying any attention to her. She smiles at the two year old and says something quietly to him. He moves away from her and she reaches out to take his arm, but he pulls away. She is still smiling at him, until he takes the slingshot that he has been wearing around his neck and flips the rubber at her. She gives him an unpleasant look and he jumps away from her. She looks away and the two year old hits her on the arm with the slingshot. His mother sees him this time and says, "Bo bo," in a rather low endearing voice. His mother then turns and goes toward the adjoining room, while the visiting woman makes a hitting motion toward the boy's buttocks. He pulls away in time and goes outside to play.

This kind of aggressive behavior would not be tolerated, however, if it was expressed toward a close friend of the family or a relative. The child is expected to learn those to whom he may show aggression and those to whom he may not. He must also learn the appropriate ways of being aggressive--depending upon the social position of the person.

Children do not have the right to show aggressive behavior toward their parents. One young adult verbalizes a common sentiment:

That's one thing we kids were never allowed to do and that was fight back (when reprimanded). We would tease Mom and act like we were going to hit her, but we never did. Then we'd really get it.

In one case, a mother controls her two year old, Marvin, age two, who is gently biting his mother's knee. She says sharply, "You bite me and you

won't have any teeth left!" Marvin pulls his mouth away from her knee with no comment.

Although parents do much yelling, threatening, and occasional slapping of their children, the children almost never fight back or cry. When a child is slapped his usual reaction is to move away quickly and then to go to another room or outside--away from the angry parent.

A six year old is told several times to stop sitting on the visitor's lap (who was pregnant). Each time the child moves away from the adult, but soon returns. Finally the mother quickly moves toward the child and slaps her across the face and shoulder, knocking the child off balance and sending her flying across the floor. The child cries hard and leaves the room immediately. She stays in the bedroom about five minutes after she stops crying.

Thus, we see that children do not have the right to show aggression toward their parents and are expected to take punishment without a visible show of emotion.

The rights and duties thus far considered are those generally ascribed to an offspring between the ages of two and adolescence. The following rights and duties are those ascribed specifically to the six year old or preschool offspring in the context of the home.

SPECIFIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF OFFSPRING

The social position of a preschooler is contingent upon the parents' use of the school as a frame of reference. Some rights and duties are appropriate to the six year old, however, which do not consider him as a preschooler. These will be considered first, followed by those appropriate to the preschooler per se. Many of the rights and

duties of the six year old are dependent upon his position in the family constellation. These will be considered last.

Age six in many ways is a privileged age. At this time the child has reached the zenith of his position as a child not yet in school. He has mastered the skills of caring for himself and is expected to do so. He has learned to control most of his emotions and cries only occasionally out of anger or frustration. He receives many of the benefits of being the youngest, as well as benefits of being the oldest--since he is the oldest child at home during the school year. This will be elaborated on in another section.

By the time the child has reached the age of five or six years, he is well aware of the roles of his parents. He has watched them work and interact since infancy. It is at this age that the parents expect the children to reflect the differences in roles between male and female. It is at this age that differential treatment between boys and girls becomes explicit. Boys and girls each have special rights as well as duties, although one must add that at this age the rights seem to far outweigh the duties.

Rights and Duties of the Daughter to her Father

The six year old daughter often receives special treatment from her father. She is often referred to as "Daddy's girl".

Dan is often seen riding through the village on his horse with his almost six year old daughter in front of him.

Almost every morning Mary rides to the pasture with her father, both sitting in front of the team-pulled wagon.

Jane's mother was behind the house, fishing for suckers. Jane was sitting

beside her father, who was cleaning his gun. Both were sitting on the front step of the house as I approached. Dave told his daughter to join her mother, but Jane shook her head negatively. Dave looked up and commented to me, "She's a real Daddy's girl." Jane smiled and hung her head.

Marlene looked as if she might cry when her mother told her she could not go in the car to the store with her father. Marlene's mother commented to me, "She sure is her father's girl."

Rights and Duties of the Son to his Father

The relationship between the father and his six year old son is much less demonstrative and less protective. Little physical closeness was observed. Nevertheless, the boy closely identifies with the father and the rights and duties of the father. He is often allowed to go with his father and his uncles (father's brothers) on short hunts, out to the pasture, or out to the fields during the haying season.

Billy, the six year old Beaver boy, came dragging himself into the house at supper time. He has spent the day in the field haying with his father. His fair skin was sunburned, and he reported being drenched in the afternoon shower. He slumped at the table almost too tired to eat. His mother commented, "Although he rides his own horse, I guess he's not yet a man." She and her husband both smiled. The boy flashed a self-conscious look.

During the school year, the children younger than six stay closer to their home and thus under supervision--however slight--of the mother. When the children are six years old, the father takes an increased interest in them and introduces them to his world of the village, the field and the woods. The child as an infant receives much fondling and attention from the father, but as a toddler his contacts

with the father are few, until the child reaches the age of five or six. This special relationship with the father seems to end, however, as soon as the child begins school. Field notes also indicate differential, yet privileged treatment of the six year old son and daughter from the mother.

Rights and Duties of the Daughter to her Mother

The six year old girl has attained the maturity and skills to perform many of the household tasks. If there are not too many children younger than herself in the family, and her abilities are not exploited, the six year old girl often develops a close identification with the mother and a pride in her household accomplishments.

"If nobody was home, I could do everything by myself. I could even cook for my Daddy." These are the comments of one six year old girl to another her own age.

This little girl could not only be a "little mother", but perhaps also a "little wife". We have already seen that the six year old daughter has rights that not even the wife has--such as close physical contact in public and making the daily rounds together.

Since the daughter must stay relatively close to home, unless she is with the father or an adult relative, the child may work with the mother in performing the many household tasks of a large family with few, if any, modern conveniences. However, few six year old girls are exploited and most spend almost all of their time at play. They exhibit pride in the tasks they do perform in the role of "little mother" and receive benefits from being the "little wife" as well. What few duties the six year old daughter does have can best be viewed in terms of the child within the family constellation, which will be found in a later

section.

Rights and Duties of the Son to his Mother

The social position of a six year old son in relation to his mother is one of the most privileged of positions within the home. He receives all the indulgence of being "Mama's baby" (and not "Mama's helper", as in the case of the daughter), as well as the rights of being the oldest male at home, when his siblings are at school and his father away. He makes demands upon his mother and exploits her to the degree that she will tolerate.

Her tolerance for such behavior on the part of her young son can best be explained by referring to earlier comments concerning social structure, where it was observed that women generally hold a position socially inferior to men. The young boy, in patterning his behavior after his father, expects many of the same rights as his father. Secondly, it is the father that disciplines the boy, and since the father may be gone during the day, the mother is left powerless in controlling her son. Thirdly, one of the few satisfactions that the married woman seems to have is that of nurturing her small children. Once they begin school they are almost completely lost to her. She cannot nurture her daughters too long after infancy, for she must see that they learn the tasks of child and home care. However, she can nurture her sons for a longer period.

The mother often views her young son as "my little man". This was seen previously in the case of the two year old exhibiting aggression against an outsider who was a friend of the family.

The mother allows her six year old a maximum amount of freedom

to roam--with the exception of the creek, which is forbidden to almost all preschoolers. In contrast to the daughter, who must remain within sight, the six year old son may be gone for hours at a time. No one questions his whereabouts or what he does. When he comes home hungry, he either fixes something for himself to eat or, more often, tells his mother to fix him something.

Billy comes in from play. His slingshot is hanging from his back pocket. He goes to the cupboard, gets a piece of homemade bread, spreads it with lard and homemade jam and sits down at the table to eat. He and his mother exchange no words, until Billy finishes his bread and loudly demands, "I wanna egg." "You bugger, you're not getting no egg, now get out of here," was his mother's reply. He finishes his bread standing on the porch. Meanwhile, his mother leaves her ironing and fries an egg on the cooling wood stove. Billy finishes his bread and heads toward the outhouse. His mother yells loudly, "You get in here and eat this egg! You bugger, eat, eat, eat!" Billy quickly comes in and sits down. He looks at the egg and then cuts himself another slice of bread. "How come I only get one!", as he views the egg again before beginning to eat. "Shit," his mother replies as she resumes her ironing.

The mothers almost always seem angry when their wandering children come home.

One mother who seemed to be summing up her feelings about her six year old boy commented, "Gordon wins again." She had previously told him to go to bed. He ignored her and sat down at the table with the adults and poured himself a cup of tea. He leisurely drank it, fixed himself some bread and jam, finished it and then went to bed with no further comment from his parents. His sisters went to bed previously, when their mother had first sent them.

We see that the six year old seems to be a rather privileged child. His rights are many; his duties few. Those duties he does have are ascribed to him because of his position in the family constellation and not because he is six per se.

Rights and Duties as a Preschooler

At some time, generally during the child's sixth year, the parents begin thinking of him in terms of going to school--as a preschooler. This position is generally marked by the use of an additional method of social control. As has been previously noted, threatening is a common method used by the parents in an attempt to control their children. The threatening agent is usually one outside of the family, preferably a non-Metis, or possibly an animal. Sometime during the child's sixth year, the teacher becomes a new threat.

"If you run around yelling like that all the time at school, the teacher will beat you blue."

"No teacher is going to stand for words like that," replied a parent to a swearing child. (One child called another a son of a bitch.)

It is in this way that the child is first explicitly taught about his rights and duties as a student--be they accurate or not. Parents, in using the teacher as a threat, were not only indicating the importance of school to the child, but were providing him with cues for behavior. The data seem to suggest three kinds of situations which relate to schooling: (1) those in which the parents indicate to the child the importance of school and provide him with cues for behavior (rights and duties); (2) those in which the importance of school is stressed, but no cues for behavior are given; and (3) those in which neither the

importance of school is stressed nor cues given. Much of what the parents know about school is deduced from what their older children who are in school mention. Thus, parents may or may not be giving useful cues to the child.

Control of the Six Year Old

Slapping, threatening, yelling and ignoring the child serve as the four primary means of social control for the Metis child. The six year old receives his share of all four, even though he appears somewhat privileged. He is generally slapped less, but threatened, yelled at and ignored for unacceptable behavior more than any of the younger pre-schoolers. The controls he has seem to be fairly well internalized by age six. His parents have very little overt control over him now. They expect him to take care of himself, and even though a mother may yell and attempt to threaten her six year old, he shows that he can. It seems that such threatening and yelling may not necessarily serve as social control.

Wally, age seven, comes in from play and asks for a piece of cake. "You can't have any, now get out of here," his mother replies. Billy, age six, comes in and cuts himself a piece of cake and begins eating it. "You piggy-brat, give me that (butcher) knife." May, their mother, takes the knife from Billy and cuts Wally a piece. The boys quickly eat the cake. As they eat their mother keeps muttering, "You damn kids, eat, eat, eat." As the boys turn to leave, Wally grabs a piece of left-over burned toast and begins eating it. May yells, "Put some butter on it, Stupe." She grabs the toast from him and spreads it with margarine, saying, "You pig." And then to a visitor in reference to Bill, "That pig, I can't fill him up. He eats all the time and still wants more." She hands Billy the toast; he

takes it and begins to eat. His mother yells, "Sit down and eat that; only a dog walks around and eats." And then yelling louder, "Sit down, you piggy-brat, and eat." Billy is quietly eating his toast, almost as if he is unaware of his mother's yelling. May continues, "Get out of here! Take that toast out of here right now! Now get out. Now." Her voice crescendos, "Hurry up! Eat, eat, eat." Billy leaves and finishes his toast on the porch since it is now raining. As he leaves, May's voice lowers, but she is still yelling. Her comments become indirect. "That Billy, eat, eat. Damn kid. In and out. Eat. Eat. That boy. Shit." With that final comment she sits at the table and lights a cigarette.

Often the child's behavior is ignored.

After the mother's usual screaming, the four children were finally quiet in bed. It is about 10:00 p.m. The mother is sipping her tea at the table, while the father sits in his usual seat by the window, gazing into the street. A few remnants of a previous children's baseball game are left in the street. I was sitting near another window and not directly observing the game. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of Billy in the game. He had apparently gotten out of bed and sneaked out the back door to rejoin the game. His father's eyes apparently focus on him. Without comment, the father quickly reached up and pulled down the blind. The incident was never mentioned.

Fathers have some control over their six year old sons and mothers have some control over their six year old daughters, but the controls cannot be said to be very significant in determining the behavior of the six year old. Parents appear to feel that rewards and punishments are inherent in the experiences themselves, and parents do not need to interfere. Just as "good" behavior is not necessarily rewarded, it follows that "bad" behavior is not necessarily punished.

It is significant to note that neither religious nor supernatural threats are used.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE OFFSPRING
IN THE FAMILY CONSTELLATION

An important factor in determining the rights and duties of the six year old Metis child is his relative position in the family constellation. As more of his rights and duties are contingent upon his relative age than his actual age of six, various rights and duties of the six year old child in the position of youngest, middle, and oldest son or daughter will be described.

Rights and Duties as Youngest Offspring

A child's being the oldest is a constant position, while being the youngest is a more temporary position and changes if other children are born. The exception is the last child born to a family. In this case we find that to a certain extent this individual, even as an adult, will retain many of the rights and duties of the baby.

In all families we find that the baby, or the youngest in the family, during his infancy, is not only an important source of pleasure for adults as well as children, but is almost constantly the center of attention. His every cry is attended to. During his waking hours he is rocked, held, talked and cooed to. No other child receives indulgence to this degree. The following was noted in the field.

When the family received some unexpected cash, they purchased a walker, a hat, shoes and a toy for the ten month old baby of the family. Other children in the family were badly in need of school

clothes. All of the family seemed excited about the baby's new things.

The parents in the family were openly upset and teased me at length for giving my ten month old baby an almost bare chicken bone instead of chocolate cake, which they had given to their five week old infant. "Poor babah," the mother crooned to my child sympathetically.

When the youngest is six years old, he often receives the same rights and privileges that he did as an infant, plus the additional ones ascribed to six year olds. If the child is six, and still the youngest, he is most likely the last child to be born in that family. Thus, he is very special to the family and especially to the mother. The child is weaned from the breast or bottle at a later age than his older siblings, he has more purchased belongings, and may be the only child in the family who has toys. He is allowed to retain many of his baby habits, which are thought to be "cute" by his siblings and especially his parents.

"The twins still talk baby talk. They are our only kids who ever did. I guess their teacher (next year) won't like it very much, but they are so cute when they do it. Susie can't say her S's or L's at all."

The youngest is seldom thought to have done any wrong by the parents, and an older child may be blamed for something done by the youngest. The six year old usually knows this and uses it to good advantage.

In the course of one afternoon an entire box of cookies was consumed. I noted that it was the six year old who took almost all of them. He accomplished this by making only a few trips to the cupboard, but taking a stack at one time. The seven year old boy took only a few cookies, but

took only one or two each time he came. The mother was gone from the house most of the afternoon and only observed that the cookies were gone. "Who ate these cookies!" the mother demanded. Each boy blamed the other. The mother screamed at the seven year old, "I told you to play outside, now get out of here; get out!" Then in a lower voice as if talking to herself, "Damn kid, you buy something around here and it disappears."

It was almost as if it had not occurred to her that the younger child could have taken the cookies. He was clever. His brother is often blamed for his wrongdoings.

In the following incident we see the mother siding with the six year old "baby" instead of the older son. Both boys are almost the same size and of almost equal strength. They are 10½ months apart in age.

The six year old says to his seven year old brother, "Come on in the other room so we can wrestle." The older ignores him. The younger jumps on the couch and pulls his brother's head down. The older reaches up and pulls the other's hair. Their mother intervenes, saying to the older, "Hey stop that, that's not wrestling." They continue struggling with each other, with the younger getting advantage over the older. Finally, red-faced and angry, the older hits the younger. The mother again says, "Stop you two." They release their holds, but then in an unexpected moment the younger grabs the older and forces his head down on the couch. The older begins hollering, but isn't quite crying. Their mother comments "That Bob (older boy) is always a coward." An aunt intervenes and cheers for the older boy. The mother comes back with an enthusiastic, "Come on, my baby, you can beat him."

There is little doubt that the youngest in the family is a favored one. This favored position continues even into adulthood. The

youngest is always "the baby".

A group of brothers, all adults in their late teens, and their father were sawing lumber when my husband and I approached. The father, whom we already knew, came to greet us. He pointed to each of his sons, who did not interrupt their work, and indicated his name. Then, pointing to a strapping teen-ager, the father said, "That's Archie, our baby."

The adult offspring, filling the position of youngest, still retains his rights to indulgence, especially from the mother.

An elderly widowed mother sat in her dimly lit log house. There was no woodstove for cooking and heating, but only a small oil heater, which was expensive to use. The old woman asked if we knew where she could buy another stove, since, as she explained, "Willy, my son, he's my baby, needed some money to go to the city, so he sold my stove." She spoke without signs of bitterness toward her 27 year old son. Her statement seemed only one of fact and explanation.

We see, then, that the position of the youngest offspring in the family constellation is a privileged one. We now turn to the six year old in a middle age position.

Rights and Duties as Middle Offspring

This section will focus on the six year old in the social position of middle child. He is neither the youngest, nor the oldest, but somewhere in between in the family constellation. This position is not a very specific one and is, in fact, not generally recognized as a position. It seems sufficient to say that the rights and duties of a child occupying this position are most nearly like either the oldest child or the youngest child, depending on which one the six year old is closer to in age. If the oldest offspring in the family is 15 years

old, then the six year old is considered more as a "baby". If the oldest is seven, then the six year old shares many of the rights and duties of the oldest.

The six year old who is next to the youngest--especially if he is a boy--retains many of his babyhood rights.

The family is eating supper. Only the next to youngest is missing. He is age six. The father spots him through the window. He is meandering down the hill, toward home. He is kicking a rock in front of him. The father smiles and says softly, "Here comes our other baby." As he comes in his mother goes to the wood-stove for the teapot and pours a hot cup for her son.

Rights and Duties as Oldest Offspring

Thus far this thesis has been primarily concerned with a description of the rights of the six year old. The duties that fall upon him are usually ascribed on the basis of his being the elder in the family constellation of offspring. Tasks and errands may be required of him if he is in fact the oldest, or if he is the oldest child remaining home from school. Duties that may be required of him during the day may fall on an older sibling after school, or in the summer. In all cases, however, it must be said that the six year old actually does few chores and is expected to play or fend for himself much of the time. We have already noted that more is expected of the six year old girl in the way of duties at home, and the boy is expected to have less protection and learn to take care of himself away from home. That is his primary duty.

The tasks assigned to the six year old, in the position of eldest, are loosely ascribed on the basis of sex. However, the primary factor is availability of children. If parents have a choice, girls are

usually chosen to tend the baby, while boys are chosen to run errands. Most of the tasks for this social position fall into these two categories.

The six year old babysitter, which is usually a girl, is seldom left in complete charge of children younger than herself, except for very brief periods. Most commonly, the child is only required to keep a younger sibling out of danger, or entertain him for a short time. The six year old babysitter is usually called upon when the mother has conflicting duties, such as preparing supper or tending to a fussing baby. A common phrase to an older child is, "Take this baby and go and play." If the mother is to be out of the village or gone from home for several hours, a six year old may be in charge of a younger sibling, but an older relative or adult "looks in". For example,

In the Brown family it is a common practice for the six year old daughter to be left in charge of her two younger siblings, while the twelve year old son was required to look in occasionally and have the final authority over the children. This pattern, which parallels that of the mother and father, is not a common one. Usually an aunt or grandmother looks in.

It is fairly common to see a six year old girl outside with her next youngest sibling. The mother is usually inside the house with the baby or babies.

If no girl is available for baby tending, occasionally a boy will be expected to tend to a younger sibling. This usually amounts to his pushing the hammock to swing the baby, or perhaps watching a toddler play outside for a short period. If a younger child is to be carried, it is usually a boy who will perform the task and not a girl.

The word "pack" is generally used in

reference to carrying a child. When the baby took his first step, the six year old boy said exuberantly, "Now we won't have to pack him any more."

The mother is sitting on the couch talking to a close friend. Her six year old son was in the street in front of the house playing. The baby, age one, was on the floor crying hard. The mother screams, "Bob, come play with this kid. Bobby, he's crying for you; come get him now!" Bob comes in. "Take this kid for a walk." With no comment he takes the baby outside.

Since the boy is given more freedom to roam within the village, he is the first choice for running errands. Children are usually asked to perform those errands which the parents deem unpleasant. If it is not unpleasant, it offers the parent an excuse to visit with neighbors. The most common unpleasant errand is that of asking for a favor--a ride to town, a dollar, magazines, sugar. These are the most common favors. A child is often sent to the store, especially if a charge is to be made and their credit is not particularly good, or if the family is not on good terms with the storekeeper (a Metis) or his family. Another common errand is one of finding out information.

"Go over to Mabel's and see if Rosie is back from the hospital yet."

This may be deemed unpleasant if the parent feels that the information is really none of his business.

It is not surprising that children find these errands distasteful and rebel loudly against performing them. The parents threaten and bribe. Or the children may refuse. If the latter is the case, little fuss or comment is made by the parent as he may recognize that he is requesting too much. The request may produce a real dilemma

for the child.

The father asked Billy to take the left over ice cream to the supervisor's deep freeze. Billy almost looks shocked that his father would ask him to ask such a favor of the supervisor. (Surely his father would never!) The father responded to Billy's look by saying, "You can either take it over or let the stuff melt." Billy whined and moaned, and then without words picked up the carton and left the house.

The child will often require a payoff for performing an unpleasant errand. "If you'll gimme a pop." "I'll do it for five cents." The parent usually pays off, and the task is performed, as unpleasant as it is.

Parents often attempt to use an older child to control a younger one. Often it is his only potentially successful means.

The father and his three children were waiting in the car for their mother to return from the store. The oldest gets out "for some fresh air". She gets out and stands on the sidewalk watching the people of the town walk by. Meanwhile, inside the car the youngest (age three) is crying to get out of the car too. The father yells at the oldest, "Get back in this car or this baby will be out there in a minute." The oldest begrudgingly gets inside, mumbling to herself.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES AS A SIBLING

The second most important social position of the six year old within the home setting is that of sibling. The rights and duties associated with this position are subordinate to those of being an offspring. However, as will become explicit, the roles are generally not in conflict.

We will view the six year old in the social positions of older and younger sibling to both same sex sibling and an opposite sex sibling. In this section the rights and duties of the six year old will be only those that fall within the context of the home. Around the age of six and above six, siblings interact in the context of the neighborhood also. This effects important changes in the rights and duties of the six year old as a sibling, but will be discussed under the rubric of neighborhood rights and duties rather than rights and duties centered in the context of the home.

Rights and Duties as Older and Younger Sibling

Within the family constellation, the six year old will be viewed as a younger sibling and as an older sibling. The rights and duties of each will be described. The data seem to indicate several parallels between the rights and duties of the child to his parents and the rights and duties of the child to an older sibling.

The duty of the older child as baby tender has already been described. This is a duty he owes his mother. However, the content of the relationship between the siblings in a baby tending situation is best described in terms of the rights and duties between siblings. The older sibling has a slightly protective, but primarily overseer role toward his younger sibling when baby tending. The baby tender's behavior toward his younger charge reflects the way in which the older is treated by his parents. If the parents do not allow the older child to curse, for example, then the baby tender will not permit it from his charge.

A mother and I were conversing when her
six year old twins got into a fight. One

twin called the other a son of a bitch. The mother appeared not to notice, but their ten year old sister yelled, "You shut your dirty mouth!" The parents of this family use such language among themselves and have been heard scolding their children for such usage.

If the parents frequently slap their children for misbehavior, then the baby tender may do the same to his charges. If parents tend to overlook their children's unacceptable behavior, then so do the baby tenders of that family. In the family in which the father has already been described as ignoring his six year old son's entering a baseball game after being sent to bed, we find:

Rose is left in charge of her two younger brothers for several hours while her parents visit relatives. She does not reprimand her brothers while they eat their lunchbox cookies, run and yell in the house, and swear at each other. Rose does report the behavior to her mother when she returns, however. Rose's report was cut short by her mother's reply, "All right, alright, that's enough." Rose walked away somewhat limply. "Damn kids," concluded the mother.

Most likely, Rose, just like her mother, would not be able to control the boys' behavior, even though it annoyed her.

In another example:

A six year old baby tender slapped her four year old charge on the shoulder when the latter spilled her milk. This six year old is often slapped by her mother.

Thus, the rights and duties of the baby tender over her sibling-charge may reflect the role behavior in the parent-child relationship.

In passing, it is interesting to note that baby tenders often seem to be able to effect control over the behavior of their charges that parents are not (or do not). This may reflect the importance that

children place on successful peer relations--often at the expense of child-parent relations. This will be elaborated on when peer rights and duties are described.

Since most baby tenders are girls, the rights and duties of siblings thus far described relate to an older sister and a younger child. If the baby tender is a six year old, the rights and duties of her charges are not differentiated on the basis of sex. However, if the baby tender is older, and the charge is a six year old, then sex differentiation is present. The six year old boy has more rights than the same age girl when under the charge of a babysitter. This parallels the rights and duties of a six year old boy to his mother. Actually, the six year old boy will usually not allow himself to be controlled by an older sister at all, and may abuse or ignore her, as he would his mother.

Angie, age nine, approaches her six year old brother who is swinging on his tire in their front yard. Angie tells him to "go in and eat". He ignores her and continues swinging. She crosses her arms and tells him, "Quit swinging and go in. Mother said." He gets off the swing, but walks away from Angie and the house. She runs after him and grabs him by the arm and begins pulling him toward the house. He kicks her hard in the shins and runs for the house.

Children older than six who have begun school are not usually assigned babysitters, but instead may be left in the care of a grandparent or aunt rather than with a sister residing with him.

Another child-to-parent and sibling-to-sibling parallel seems apparent. Just as the emphasis is on the child's learning from the parents rather than the parents' explicitly teaching the children, the

younger siblings learn from the older.

Billy, age six, is carefully shaving the bark from a Y-shaped stick as the finishing stage of making a sling shot. Marvin, almost two years old, and his brother are sitting on the ground nearby watching. Billy sees a bird overhead, raises his unfinished sling shot in the air and pulls an imaginary rubber. When another bird flies overhead, Marvin raises his arms and pretends to shoot at the bird, using his fingers as his play sling shot. No words are exchanged between the brothers.

In another example:

Two sisters, ages six and eight, are in the pasture picking Saskatoon berries. They carry lard cans as pails. The younger sister watches the older pick for awhile, then begins picking the berries from the same branch as her sister. After a few minutes she picks from the opposite side of the bush, still watching her sister, as if making sure she is doing it properly. Within a short time the younger sister is picking from an adjacent bush. (Most children are not this careful about their berry-picking techniques.)

In these examples we see the six year old learning from a same sex sibling. Since the activities of the six year old are generally sex-differentiated, we would expect this. In the following example, a younger child is learning from a six year old.

Bonnie, age six, gets a bowl from the cupboard and fills it with cereal. She begins eating it with a spoon. Her younger brother is watching her. Then, he gets a bowl, a used one, fills it to the brim with cereal and begins eating it with his fingers. Bonnie silently hands him a spoon and he attempts to use it. He finishes the bowlful using a combination of spoon, fingers and lifting the bowl to his mouth.

We find that the skills generally needed by a child consider-

ably younger than six can be learned from either sex. However, the more specialized skills needed by the six year old are best learned from someone of the same sex.

Just as parents give special favor to the youngest children in the family, so do the older siblings to their younger ones. When the older children have a treat, often each will give some to the baby. If they forget, their mother will often remind them, and they share with the younger one or ones without fussing.

The three siblings (brothers) come in from play. They enter the house laughing and talking. Their mother is by the doorway and as they enter no words are exchanged. Gordon spots a coke on the counter and begins drinking. The mother yells, "Hey, that's for everybody." He passes the bottle to his brothers and they all drink. Their baby sister is playing nearby on the floor. The seven year old brother gets a jar and pours a little coke into it and gives it to his sister. The baby gulps and chokes. "You gave her too much, Stupid!" the mother criticized. She takes the jar from the baby and drinks some of it herself and then returns it to the baby. After the baby had drunk or spilled the remains, another brother poured a little into the baby's jar. Only the oldest did not offer any. The coke bottle was soon emptied.

When playing with the baby does not interfere with playing outside or with peers--such as after dark, or on inclement days--older children seem to greatly enjoy playing with the baby and may even vie for the baby's affection or attention.

Marvin had just taken his first consecutive steps. All of the family were greatly excited and sat around him talking and laughing. "Come to me," the children kept calling to the baby. The baby would take a few steps and then with much laughter, would fall into a heap. This

caused the others to laugh. Marvin kept trying to walk toward Billy, the six year old, while the other two older siblings kept begging the baby to come their way. When the baby did not go to the seven year old, he left the circle and went into another room. The six year old affectionately hugged the baby when he approached him.

When several siblings are together, the older siblings are expected to favor the youngest. It is often done begrudgingly, especially by ones near to the age of the youngest.

The children considered it a great treat to ride in our car, and the front seat was considered the choice one. When riding without their parents, Rose, the oldest girl, always sat in the back seat without question. Billy, age six, and Wally, age seven, almost always argued for the front seat. Almost always, the older sat in the back. One afternoon Wally, as if by plan, was firmly planted in the front seat of the car when we were ready to leave. Rose went around the car and climbed into the back seat. Billy, the youngest, was the last to arrive. When he saw Wally in the front seat, without comment he sat down next to him and began pushing toward the driver's seat. "Hey, stop that!" yelled Wally. "Get out of my seat!" yelled Billy. Wally tried his best to remain firmly in his place, but Billy closed the door and was using it as leverage to displace Wally. Finally, Wally, as he climbs into the back seat almost in tears, mumbles, "Just because he is the baby ..." and his voice trails off as he seems to be concentrating on holding back the tears.

Nevertheless, most young children seem to feel little jealousy toward younger siblings. Perhaps it is because they themselves receive many of the rights of the youngest, plus those ascribed to them because of their added age.

The previous rights and duties of the six year old as sibling

are those which seem to parallel the rights and duties of the child as offspring, namely, those rights and duties associated with baby tending, learning, and babying the youngest. The following rights and duties are others which are ascribed to the six year old as a sibling.

Other Rights and Duties of the Sibling

We have already seen an example of the limitations placed on physical fighting between two brothers. Parents may shout their disapproval, but do not interfere to the point of stopping the fighting. Name-calling is a more common means of aggression between all siblings, and especially sisters. Even brothers are more likely to resort to this means rather than physical aggression. Sisters do not use physical aggression toward each other, except in situations defined as baby tending, when the older is specifically in charge of the younger. Boys and girls also were not seen using physical aggression toward each other. Again, name-calling seemed to be the primary method of fighting. Often after the name-calling, the individual siblings will move away from each other, ignoring one another. The children may resort to tattling, but usually parents do not tolerate this, following their philosophy of letting the children handle situations themselves.

Two brothers and a sister, plus several cousins are playing work-up baseball in the road. Wally, age seven, hits his six year old brother for an unknown reason. They begin name-calling: "You bastard," the youngest calls his brother. The game is at a temporary halt because of the fight. The younger does not hit his brother. The name-calling continues. Rose, their older sister, goes into the house and tells their mother that the boys "are cussing and hitting each other". The mother looks up, annoyed at being interrupted, and replies, "Oh, shut up and

get out of here. Go and play." She then sticks her head out the door and yells, "You boys cut that out." Meanwhile the game has been resumed and Rose has lost her place. She yells bitterly, "You guys aren't playing fair." She wanders away from the game looking very sad. The game soon breaks up and her girl cousins join her in walking down the road.

Just as the siblings shared the coke in a previous example, they often automatically share other items.

Almost without thinking, Bill hands one of his two cookies to his younger brother. The younger accepts it eagerly with no comment.

Parents generally try to avoid argument and jealousy among their children by giving them the same or equivalent gifts or treats.

Two baseball mitts and two balls were bought for Billy and Wally in town. The boys seemed very proud of their mitts and ran to the street to use them. It turned out that Wally threw the ball with his left hand, making the right-hand mitt awkward, to say the least. The parents talked of returning it for a left-hand mitt, but Wally continued to try to use it the rest of the day, making it unfit to return.

Children share their clothes if they are near or the same size. It is usually the oldest and the youngest who receive the most new clothing. The oldest does not have access to clothing handed down from an older sibling, and if a child is the youngest in a large family, hand-me-down clothing is too ragged for him to wear. However, just being the youngest often entitles him to new clothing if money is available. The six year old preschooler usually has fairly good clothing. This is very relativistically speaking, since by middle-class standards all clothing of children not in school would be considered

ragged. Since the preschooler's clothing is handed down from a school child, who most likely received his first new clothes for school since infancy, the clothes may be in fairly good shape, at least for play. The six year old does not seem to be very aware of his looks and seems to be content to wear whatever is available. The six year old boy often wants cowboy clothes--Levis, boots and especially a hat, but usually money is not available for such items. If they are purchased, it is usually for a special occasion such as a baseball tournament, rodeo, or pow-wow in town.

Siblings of the same sex and those closest in age often share the same bed, and most siblings share the same sleeping room. Usually, the youngest children--those between birth and three years--and the parents will sleep in one room and the other siblings in another.

Billy, age six, and Wally, age seven, share the davenport for sleeping. The back drops down, making a small bed. All summer they slept in their new bathing trunks and used them during the day as undershorts. Usually before falling asleep, and during much yelling and threatening from both parents to be quiet, the boys tickle and wrestle with each other under the covers. Much stifled giggling is usually heard. Rose, nearing puberty, sleeps in the same room with the boys, but separated from them by a curtain. She rarely interacts with the boys once all of them are in bed, but may yell at the boys to be quiet. Several times they were heard singing together until they were asleep.

Even though siblings share the same sleeping room, a certain amount of physical privacy is maintained. First, all children sleep in their clothes; second, the sleeping room is dimly lit, if illuminated at all; and third, opposite sex siblings do not sleep together unless it is an older sister and a baby brother. The latter is not uncommon and

reflects the older sister's duty as a baby tender.

Children rarely exhibit themselves when nude. The six year old shows some embarrassment when nude in front of his older opposite sex siblings, but same sex siblings may bathe together if they are close in age.

Billy and Wally, ages six and seven respectively, are washing themselves from a big basin. They are in the sleeping area, separated from the rest of the family by a curtain. Their mother is washing her year old son from the same basin. The mother asks Billy to go into the other room to get a towel. He whines and does not want to go. Finally, the mother says, "Here, put these on!" With a sheepish look on his face, Billy enters the room wearing his underpants and dripping water behind him. Rose, his older sister, titters. Billy moves more quickly, gets the towel and returns to the sleeping room. Rose waits until the boys and the baby have washed and then washes herself from the basin. She shares the room with her mother, who is dressing.

The six year old has little right to privacy within the house, but may find it in the outhouse, or in the nearby woods. Within the house, the six year old has a right to view all that takes place. The parents' only privacy is when their offspring are asleep. In some families teen-agers may make love on a bed where all can see. In other families, teen-agers are not allowed such relations within the house, and they accommodate themselves in another place. In still other families, the teen-age girls are carefully protected and even isolated from such relations. Six year old children do not show any particular emotional response to seeing petting or even sexual intercourse. Siblings and cousins of the pre-teenage group may expose themselves in game-type activities. The six year old may be allowed to watch. This

will be elaborated upon in the section describing the rights and duties of cousins.

Six year old boys, unlike their seven year old brothers, are not allowed to attend evening functions with their pre-teen or teen-age siblings. Girls are not allowed to visit such function until about eight or nine.

Other rights and duties of the six year old as a sibling in the context of the neighborhood instead of the home will be viewed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE SIX YEAR OLD OUTSIDE THE HOME

Although the social positions for the preschooler outside of the home appear to be as varied as those in the home, the behavior from which they are inferred is less easily observed. To the extent that data were available, the rights and duties of the six year old in the context of the neighborhood, village and playschool will be described. This will include kinship as well as non-kinship behavior.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES AS A PLAYMATE

From the time the child walks, his reference group begins to gradually change from that of his parents to that of his brothers and sisters.

A ten month old child clung to his mother and dropped his eyes in the presence of White strangers.

However, this same child a year later in a similar situation

... left his Mother's side, and rushed to an adjacent room where his brothers were playing. He played peek-a-boo at the strangers from behind the door. Shortly, he came out of the room with his brothers and sat down between them.

The Neighborhood

It is during the first summer after the child walks that his sphere enlarges even more to include the children in his neighborhood. During the long dark and bitter cold winter, he is confined to the house to play. However, when the winter is past and the child is able to walk,

the neighborhood is his in which to roam. Because these neighborhoods are large, only a small portion surrounding his house is explored at first. As he becomes older, he feels confident enough to travel its length. The six year old boy generally does not travel more than a two-mile radius from his home, within his neighborhood. Girls are restricted from much roaming by their parents.

It was indicated previously that the neighborhood is socially defined and includes that area in which one's kinsmen live. Those who have no large number of kinsmen on the colony tend to live in isolated areas, or on the fringes of another's neighborhood. Each neighborhood, and there are five major ones, is stretched along a single road and is generally about three miles from one end to the other.

The Play Group

Siblings make up the child's first play group, but it is extended to include cousins--the children living near them--while the child is very young. Same age cousins are generally close friends throughout childhood and the school years.

The neighborhood play group is generally composed of only siblings and cousins. Others who may be included are the cousins of a cousin, who may live in an adjacent neighborhood. Others, to a lesser degree, are those children who have no cousins living in proximity.

Children living in isolated areas have only their siblings for playmates. A few families, and particularly one living in the village, do not allow their children to play with others. No kinsmen live near them. They must stay within their own yard "for their own protection". But most children have many playmates and several of their own age.

Rights of the Play Group

Each neighborhood has its own area for playing baseball or kick ball, plus its own swim hole and berry patches. Children who live in other neighborhoods do not play in these areas, nor do the children compete for areas.

The children in the Brown kinship group have their swim hole less than a quarter of a mile from that of the Jensen-Larioux swim hole. Yet, each never swims in the hole of the other, even though one hole is preferable to the other because of its sandy beach.

Two neighborhood baseball diamonds are within the village limits, and often a group is short of players, and yet they do not merge.

Parents do not encourage their children to enter another's neighborhood and consider it just if a child is hurt when he has "... no business being there".

The only mixing of neighborhood groups is by an outsider, and these artificial groups are often not successful. An example of this follows:

A White farmer living near the colony tried without success to organize a Scout troop.

The local supervisor has to some degree of success organized a little league baseball team. Boys eagerly attend practise and games with the same enthusiasm shown by their fathers on the colony baseball team. Birthday parties occasionally bring age mates that cut across family lines together.

It is the parents who reinforce and interpret these relevant aspects of the social structure for the child--who he plays with and where. However, the child learns through interaction with his peers

what his actual rights and duties are as a playmate.

The rights and duties of the six year old vary depending on his relative age within the group and whether he is with cousins, siblings or outsiders. The rights of children in a play group usually include deciding rules or interpreting rules of a game; deciding on the activity to be played; choosing positions in a game and controlling equipment such as bats and balls. Duties in the play group include offering protection, such as from another child or an animal--or even protection from parents by not tattling; obeying another playmate; chasing balls; accepting a lesser position in a game; or even getting cookies or snacks for others.

Since the rights and duties of the six year old in the play group are usually contingent upon his relative age within a group, we will view him as the oldest playmate in a group and the youngest. Sex differences will be pointed out where relevant.

Rights and Duties as the Oldest in the Play Group

While older children are at school, the five and six year olds in a neighborhood generally play together, or they play with those younger than themselves. If there are enough young children living in proximity, they will tend to separate on the basis of sex.

Almost every day in the late spring a group of five preschool boys--all cousins--played together in an open field.

Four girls from the same extended family as above, and from the same age group, played together. They moved back and forth in the area between two of their homes.

Running, climbing, jumping and other vigorous physical

activities characterize the play of these children. They are often on fences and roofs. They have few toys to differentiate their play on the basis of sex. However, boys make stick guns and girls find ropes for jumping. Boys of this age often imitate the cowboy, using real calves at times. Girls were not seen playing house or otherwise imitating their mothers' activities as boys imitated their fathers' activities.

If the six year old is the oldest of the play group, he maintains rights over those younger. Age seems to have precedence over generation. Roger, age five, and his older niece, age six, illustrate this point:

Roger and Luanne often play together during the day while their mothers visit. The niece is often "bossy" toward her younger uncle. When he becomes provoked with her, he leaves the yard, knowing that he has greater roaming privileges than she.

This example is shaded by the fact that they are close in age, and rights based on sex differences come into play. Although an older child has rights over a younger, a younger boy will take only so much coercion from an older sister or cousin before he will leave, call her names or even hit her. However, if the age differential is several years, the older girl's combined roles of baby tender and older playmate give her rights over a younger boy. A younger girl generally accepts her subservient position.

The following shows the assertion of rights by a six year old boy over a same age girl.

Luanne and Gilbert, six year old cousins, were playing together with an old truck inner-tube. Gilbert wanted to roll the inner-tube down the hill, but Luanne wanted to jump on it apparently. After a

short verbal exchange, Gilbert yelled, "Oh, go on home!" Luanne objected loudly. "No! It's mine." However, she tearfully left Gilbert as he began rolling the tube down the hill.

Thus, we see that the six year old, and especially the six year old boy, has many rights in the playgroup. This parallels his position in the family, where he is often the favored one. The six year old's duties are few when he is the oldest in the play group. Baby tending is the primary one, and has been discussed previously.

Rights and Duties as the Youngest in the Play Group

After school, when the older children are home, the preschooler is no longer content playing with younger children and strives to find his place among the older. School age children often play team games or semi-organized games of work-up baseball or kick ball. The five and six year olds may play on the fringes of these games, or may actively join. Because the six year old is generally the youngest that is allowed to play with school age children, he has few rights and many duties. The youngest is usually very willing to serve the older in order to be a part of his activities.

Younger boys, particularly, aspire to be part of the activities of older boys. Older boys often ignore the younger and the latter will perform favors such as chasing balls or running errands for the older in order to win his approval. Often the younger will be admitted to a game in this way. Preschool boys may also join older boys in fantasy games of riding horses, lassoing cattle and hunting wild game. These games often imitate the activities of their fathers.

Thus, we see that the favored position ascribed to the six year

old in the home--in his role as "baby"--is reversed when he interacts with his brothers, sisters and cousins in the context of the neighborhood. Here he must prove his ability to perform in order to be accepted.

Girls' games are usually less organized and incorporate fewer numbers than those of boys. Girls commonly walk around the neighborhood together chatting and shyly noticing boys. Younger girls often tag along. Older girls accept the younger, in part because of the former's role as baby tender. The younger also serve the older in order to win their favor. In this following example a younger cousin tries to oblige her older cousin.

May comes in the house with an empty clip board. She looks through drawers and on shelves. Her mother asks, "What are you after?" "Paper," came the reply. "There isn't any paper, now get outside." May heads for the door as her father asks, "What do you need it for anyhow?" May indicates that Annie, her cousin, wants it. As May leaves her mother comments in disgust, "Jeepers, let her get her own!"

Often school age girls join together in fantasy games, apparently taken from stories learned at school. Preschoolers, especially girls, may join in as slaves, maids or lesser positions. These fantasy games have a fairy tale quality, completely unlike the fantasy games of boys which are imitative of positions to which they aspire.

Six year olds play an active part in the ritualized combat games of school age children. Sides are divided on the basis of sex and include cops and robbers and cowboys and Indians. These games often last for hours and are especially popular in the summer.

Nearly fifteen cousins from the Brown family--ranging in age from four to

thirteen--spent most of the afternoon playing cowboys and Indians. Girls, and the youngest boys, were the Indians and the boys were the cowboys. (Except for the role of the younger boys, this is an historically accurate division of Indian-White relations that resulted in Metis.) Sticks, used as guns and make-shift tomahawks served as weapons.

We became an active part of the play, since we were camped on the hill that was in the center of their play area. In play we were attacked, with the children surrounding the trailer. The "White" boys remained in the bushes in hiding from the "Indians", but soon joined them in capturing us. There was much whooping and yelling and beating on the trailer with sticks and fists. Finally, we "surrendered" and came out of the trailer. The older children were apparently embarrassed by the reality of the play, but the youngest were thoroughly engrossed, yelling louder and louder and waving their weapons.

As part of the game, I was designated a White nurse that would care for the wounded, and then I was to die "with the others". Laughter and yelling continued until a truck horn signaled the children to one of their homes. They laughed and waved as they left. "See you tomorrow", one of them called as they disappeared over the hill.

During the summer, the older children spend most of their day at the swim holes. Preschoolers play together until the older return. Then the five and six year olds join the older in play, which often continues until ten or eleven o'clock at night--when northern daylight ends in the summer.

Although most of the child's sex education takes place through observation within the home, six year olds often discuss such matters among themselves and may be allowed to watch "lights-out" activities

among cousins.

The parents were gone and the children were outside playing a chase game--with girls against boys. The children were three groups of cousins and were generally under the supervision of one of their parents. When it became late, most of the children went home, leaving six cousins from two families. Five of them were of school age and pre-pubescence, the other a six year old. The six of them went into the house where the parents were gone. All of the lights were burning in the house. The children entered the bedroom that was ours and turned out the light. Giggling could be heard. After five minutes or so, I went in. The children, all but the six year old, were sitting on two parallel twin beds with girls' knees touching boys' knees. The six year old was sitting on the bed, apart from the others. They seemed very embarrassed at my entering and all quickly left the room.

Just as younger girls are never a part of older boys' activities, neither are younger boys a part of the girls'. The only occasional exception to the latter is if older girls are baby tending a six year old boy.

The important factor in discussing the rights and duties of cousins and siblings in the positions of playmates is that the position of being an age mate takes precedence over any other position. The six year old is just entering a stage in which the approval of one's peers is more important than that of older or younger siblings and cousins and even one's parents. Although school provides the actual rite of intensification of this relationship with one's peers, it has long been of importance to the preschooler.

Thus, within the context of the neighborhood rather than the home, we find that the rights and duties of an age mate take precedence

over those of being either a sibling or a cousin. However, since these same or near age playmates are either cousins or siblings, we find a convergence of rights and duties. The rights and duties of each role are in no way conflicting, except perhaps the role of baby tender.

Within the neighborhood context, a same age cousin has rights over a sibling.

School age cousins in the Jensen and Larioux families were playing work-up in baseball. Albert, a preschool six year old who had been chasing balls in the outfield, wanted a work-up position. His brother, who was in the game, yelled something to Albert. Albert responded by leaving the area of the game and walking up the hill alone.

However, if interests are not too conflicting, a sibling may stand up for a younger sibling or cousin--even in the face of an age mate.

A group of cousins playing a chase type game told two preschool cousins they could not enter their game. When the two showed disappointment, a brother of one of them said, "Oh, they can be on my side", in a very condescending tone.

Unless a parent strongly objects, the rights of an age mate come before parents or even a sibling.

A same age cousin is waiting for Leona in front of her house. Leona goes toward the door to join her. Leona's mother yells, "You get in there and wash out those diapers and scrub this floor." Leona moans and answers, "I'm washing out those diapers and then I'm leaving, and I'm not watching no kid." Within five minutes, Leona and her cousin are walking down the road arm in arm. Leona's mother is clearly peeved and exclaims, "Those damn kids!"

RIGHTS AND DUTIES AS AN AUNT OR UNCLE

Because it is not unusual for both a mother and a daughter to be giving birth within the same period of time, a six year old aunt or uncle is fairly common. In some cases the aunt or uncle will be younger than their nephews and nieces. The data seem to indicate that an aunt or uncle must have adult status before assuming the rights and duties associated with these positions. In an example cited previously, the younger uncle and his year older niece played together as cousins or age mates and assumed the rights and duties ascribed to the latter.

If the aunt or uncle is older than the nephew or niece, but not yet an adult, the roles become comparable to younger-older siblings or cousins. Often this relationship is sparked with a great deal of teasing. In the following example of this

Amy, the teen-aged aunt, teased her visiting six year old nephew almost endlessly. "Your parents left you here and went to B.C.," she teased. After being teased on and off all afternoon, about being left behind, he told her, "I'll just take your horse and ride it to my house."

RIGHTS AND DUTIES AS NEPHEW OR NIECE

Because of the residence pattern and the child's proximity to the brothers and sisters of his parents, his interaction with them is frequent. His aunts and uncles frequently visit his home. The nephew and niece receive both teasing--often for the purposes of social control--and emotional support from them. In an example of the former:

Early in the morning Maria and her daughters and two nieces were picking

berries. One of the daughters and one of the nieces left the group and returned to the village. Later in the afternoon Maria stops by her sister-in-law's house and sees her niece. "Too lazy, too lazy ... too lazy to pick berries," teased the aunt. "And all that noise about being afraid of a bear!" finished the aunt. The niece grinned shyly and looked away from her mother and aunt with no comment.

We have previously cited an example of the aunt giving emotional support to a middle child, while the mother supported her "baby" while the boys were wrestling. In another example, a woman commented:

That's my sister's boy. He plays over here sometimes when things get too rough at home with all those brothers.

This latter situation does not seem common. Since most families are large, and houses are small, additional children in the house are generally not welcome. However, a niece and nephew freely play in the yards of their kinsmen and may be offered a snack of cookies or crackers. Children rarely eat meals in the house of another--and especially not at their aunt's or uncle's.

When children are in the house or yard of their aunt or uncle, their role is that of offspring, and their rights and duties are similar to those of their cousins.

An uncle yells to his nephew in his yard, "Get off that horse, you bugger!" The boy obliges.

If parents are gone overnight, their children may be divided among the homes of aunts and uncles, and the children eat meals and sleep with their cousins.

An aunt is softly crooning to her nephew who is spending the night since his parents are away from the colony overnight. "He'll probably have trouble going

to sleep, since he usually sleeps with his brothers," commented the aunt.

Since a child's aunt is generally at home caring for her own family, and his uncle is more likely to be visiting or working in the village, the uncle is more in a position to do favors for his nephews and nieces. Nephews and nieces are often given rides with their uncles-- either on horseback, on a tractor, or in a truck or car. Or, they may walk together to the store or to the home of a kinsman. It is generally the nephew who tags along with the uncle, since the niece is more restricted to her home. From field notes we see this illustrated:

The uncle pulls up in front of his brother's house with his truck. He is on his way to and from the creek to get barrels filled with water. His nephews and nieces pile on the back, standing between the barrels. One mother yells at her seven year old daughter, "You get off that truck and get in here and take care of this baby." She hides behind a barrel, pretending not to hear. The truck pulls away. "Son of a bitch!" comments the mother.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES AS GRANDSON OR GRANDDAUGHTER

The relationship between the grandparents living in the neighborhood and their grandchildren is generally a very close one. This is especially true if the grandparents no longer have children of their own living at home. Cousins often play at the homes of their grandparents and have many rights while visiting there. They are often in the house eating snacks or a meal and may even spend the night. Preschoolers often visit their grandparents while older siblings are in school; thus their relationship is often of a more special nature than

that of school age children.

The duties of grandchildren--and especially preschoolers--are few. They include gathering wood, carrying water, or going to the store. They are generally cheerfully performed, especially if a reward of money or a treat is offered. These duties conspicuously lack the negative social connotations of the errands and favors asked by parents. The grandmother and grandfather each play a different role in their relationship with their grandson and granddaughter. As we view the role of each, the rights and duties of the grandchildren become evident.

The grandfather generally plays the role of the mean old man who will punish the child if he does not behave properly. However, the grandfather acts in jest, and laughs heartily when the child exhibits fear or shyness. One grandfather tells the following story about his grandsons:

They were way up in my tree.... Way up, and I was afraid for 'em. Even the little one here (age six). I yelled at 'em, "Git out of there," and I ran to get my gun. "I'll blast you all out, now move." I kept the gun on 'em and you should have seen them. At first they couldn't even move they were so scared, and then they moved out of that tree fast.

By the time he finished the story, he was laughing so hard he had to wipe his eyes. Everyone joined in the laughter.

Grandfathers particularly seem to enjoy yelling at their grandsons in the presence of their protective grandmother.

"Boy, I'm going to come over there and get you, and then you'll be sorry. You'll wonder what hit you. Now git up to that table and eat right now." The boy was already quite eager to go to the table and looked toward his grandmother, apparently for support. She had just told

him to wash his hands before coming. The grandfather laughed at the boy's conflicting situation and then he yelled at his wife, "You're going to starve that boy to death making him wait like that!" The boy quickly washed his hands and came to the table without drying them.

One grandmother told me, concerning her six year old grandson,

He comes over and sticks his head in the door to see if the old man is around. If he isn't, he comes on in for a cookie or a visit. He don't say much after his grandpa comes in from the field.

Around the age of six or seven, the child begins to realize that the grandfather has been teasing him all these years and has never carried out any of his threats. The child need not fear the grandfather after all.

In fact, the grandfather often spends time teaching the grandson things the boy's father does not. Often the grandfather speaks Cree to his grandchildren, and they begin to understand it. He may teach his grandson about hunting, or cleaning a gun, or riding a horse.

After the child has reached school age, he begins to tease his grandfather in a manner that he himself was teased. One nine year old girl and her grandfather

... called each other "You Nigger!" over and over and louder and louder, until they were laughing so hard they had to quit.

But the six year old does not yet dare to do this, although he is beginning to realize he is being teased.

The grandmother's role is one of protection from "the mean old man". Her children are gone from home and she seems to enjoy protecting and giving other special attention to her young grandchildren. She may speak some Cree to her grandchildren, but almost all adults of

this generation know some English. The grandparents expect their grandchildren to learn some Cree. The grandmother spends time with her granddaughters as she prepares bannock (Indian bread), makes moccasins, sews or does beadwork. Few granddaughters show a keen interest in learning the skills and generally do not.

Most grandparents are generally quite permissive with their grandchildren and do not punish or scold them, despite the teasing of the grandfather. In one unusual case a mother indicated that

... my mother really spansks those kids if she hears them cuss. Usually we don't pay any attention to it, figuring they will quit soon enough if we don't make a scene out of it.

Grandparents may be asked to prepare a medication for their grandchildren if they are ill. Teas or poultices may be prepared by them and given to the child until the parents can take the child in town to the doctor.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES IN THE VILLAGE

The role of the six year old in village-wide activities is primarily that of observer. When he is not observing, he is participating in activities of his own, oblivious to the adult activities which surround him. Although the six year old may accompany his parents to a village activity, such as a baseball game, church service, dance or bingo game, he does not sit with them or participate with them.

At baseball games the six year old girl usually has some baby tending duties; however, the six year old boy is free to roam with his peers--his brothers and cousins. Their primary activity is one of

gathering pop bottles to be redeemed in cash. Money is then spent on pop, candy or hot dogs. The boys roam around the ball park, often waiting for an adult who is drinking a pop to drop his bottle. There are no bleachers, and families sit in or near their cars, or on fences or blankets to watch the game. Thus, bottles are strewn quite widely. Boys often get into squabbles over the bottles, and boys of one kinship group generally side together. A lone boy, with no kinsmen, has little chance to gather bottles, since no one saves bottles particularly for him, and since he may be overpowered by large groups of boys. Little physical fighting occurs at these functions, but this is usually because boys of lesser social status relinquish their rights automatically.

Herb and his brother were gathering bottles at the ball game. They had gathered about five and were walking toward the stand to redeem them for money. A group of related boys were coming toward them, but had not yet seen them. Herb and his brother hid their bottles behind the wheel of a car and walked past the larger group. No words were exchanged between them, even though some were age mates. The larger group found the pop bottles and redeemed them. The two brothers made no claim on the bottles.

The six year old girls may join other cousins, taking their younger siblings with them. The group of girls usually does not venture far from their parents who are usually sitting in proximity. The girls are often given money for snacks and are not expected to hunt for bottles. This may cause arguments and hard feelings among the boys, who may feel that they are entitled to money also. However, the boys may be refused, or may be given money in addition to that which they earn from bottles.

Six year old children were observed at the Roman Catholic

Church. The girls may or may not sit with their parents, but the boys almost never do. In the balcony of the small church the first row is occupied by a long line of young boys. Many sit on the floor and dangle their feet over the edge of the balcony. There is much noise and giggling and parents are quite annoyed; however, there is little they can do with their children upstairs.

Although six year old girls almost never attend dances, a few six year old boys do. However, other parents frown on this. The boys who do attend sit on a bench that lines the wall with the other boys. They watch rather self-consciously and occasionally giggle. Generally, they do not stay for long.

Six year old boys and girls both occasionally attend bingo games and participate with their parents (on the parents' cards) or with a kinsman. They usually do not have their own cards. It is the children, however, who are given the money to purchase new cards at the end of each game.

The primary duty of the child at these functions is to remain as unobtrusive as possible in front of the adults. The functions are for adults, and they are not to be bothered with the children. The children may attend, but must leave the adults alone. Those who do not are left at home, often with a grandparent.

Social Control in the Village

Social control of children is expected to be primarily from the family. It was previously pointed out that children are expected to remain within their own neighborhoods and thus under the supervision of their own kinsmen. All parents agree that children who live outside of

the village limits are easier to control than those who live inside. For this reason many parents wish they did not live within the village itself. A very common comment heard is "You just never know where your kids are when you live in (the village)...." The problem of controlling the behavior of children in the village is often the topic of conversation--often heated--at the colony public meetings. The parents who are strict with their children and the parents who are more permissive are in constant conflict over child control. Name-calling in public may result.

As a result of one argument, a motion was passed to ban slingshots and a \$5.00 fine for the parents of any child caught breaking lights or windows with slingshots. There was no way to enforce the new rule, however, and most children continued carrying slingshots.

In another public meeting concern was expressed for children who played in the road. Often their lives were threatened when teenagers drove their cars at high speeds over the dirt roads. One group of related parents blamed another for not watching their children more closely. The verbal exchange got quite lively. Finally,

Someone suggested that they put up a sign reading "Watch out for Children". Someone else added, "And Dogs". People tittered. All agreed that the sign might help the situation, but someone stated that it might appear unfriendly to visitors. Another suggestion was made that they add, "Welcome to Beaver Metis Colony". People seemed to think this was a good idea; however, none of the signs were ever put up.

At one meeting it was suggested that the colony appoint a village warden--someone like a "truant officer"--who would go up and down the roads at night to see that there was no mischievous behavior and that

children were in by nine o'clock.

It was suggested that the warden be someone without children so that he would not be prejudiced against other children. Someone was suggested who had no other kinsmen on the colony, but he refused, saying that he was gone too much. Someone suggested that the warden be a good runner, since the children would chase after him. He should have some kind of transportation both to get around and to get away. No one was ever appointed.

Although some of these comments were made in apparent jest, it indicates some of the problems the parents face in controlling their children in the village.

During Hallowe'en a councilman was appointed as a temporary warden. He rode on horseback throughout the village. He served more as an agent of threat than anything else.

In summary, most of the controls on the behavior of the six year old are those which he has learned at a younger age from his parents. More overt controls are now effected by his peers. The village and the colony itself are not effective as agents of control.

SOCIAL POSITIONS IN THE VILLAGE PLAYSCHOOL

During the second summer of research on the colony, I held a playschool for the six year old preschoolers. The purpose of the school was two-fold: one, was to provide the children with experiences that would prepare them, in part, for grade one, by using my skills as a credentialed teacher; and two, by using my skills as an anthropologist, to provide a setting in which to observe the role behavior of six year olds in various social positions. Only the latter will be dealt with in

this thesis.

The setting for the school was the large, one room community hall that stands in the center of the village. The school was held every weekday for six weeks for two and a half hours in the morning. During the third week, the children were required to attend a four day pre-school and testing period in the nearby town, in order to determine their placement in the centralized school that they would attend the following fall. Twenty-four of the twenty-five preschoolers on the colony attended the playschool. There were only ten absences for the six week period.

Three of the five major kinship groups were represented at the school, with one-third of the children (eight) being Browns and one-fourth (five) being Beavers. Only one Loden attended. One-fourth of the children (five) belonged to families that had no other kinsmen on the colony. The remainder of the children (five) belonged to small kinship groups. Two sets of identical twins attended; one set girls, the other boys. Also attending were two near age sisters and two near age brothers. Two generations of six year olds were represented by an uncle and his niece. Eleven girls and thirteen boys attended. Thus, it was possible to observe the children in social positions that were related to kinship groups; kinship relationships such as sibling, cousin and uncle; and also sex. Social positions related to one's own group and the other group were also apparent. Because of my relationship with many of the children from the previous year, the social position of friend and now student as well were available to them.

I hired four women from the colony to serve as teacher assistants. They represented three of the five major kinship groups on

the colony. Three of them were mothers of children attending, and all four were aunts of many of the children. Thus, the children also had available the social positions of nephew or niece, student and offspring.

Thus, within this contrived school setting, it was possible to observe behavior related to most of the social positions available to the preschooler. The child was found in a situation in which he must choose the appropriate social position.

Each day, two forty-five minute periods were for play. During these periods, the mothers (four of them) were given specific areas to "observe". They were told not to interfere with the play of the children unless the children were in danger of seriously hurting themselves or someone else. They could intervene, however, if the children specifically asked them to, such as asking them to read a story, or play a record. No rules were imposed. The situation was structured only by the limitations of the building and the activities provided (however, they were free to provide their own). The large room, with a stage at one end, was divided by long benches into various areas--each having a different activity. The largest area was for balls, bean bags, jump ropes, transportation toys, and other toys for active games. The stage was the doll center, with dolls, furniture, dress-up clothing, mirror, etc. Other areas were for records, books, clay, puzzles, manipulative toys, painting, etc. Crayons, pencils, scissors, paper and paste were also available. Most of these latter activities took place at small, child-size tables and chairs clustered together. On specified days, the children were also free to play in the area surrounding the school. Balls and bats were provided.

With the children active at play, and the mothers acting as

teachers, I was free to move throughout the play area, noting behavior. During the more structured teaching situations, two girls from the Alberta Service Corps noted specific behaviors of the children-- particularly the ways in which they grouped themselves.

This final section of the thesis will discuss the various social positions selected by the six year olds in the playschool and will briefly describe various role behaviors that identify these positions.

The Social Position of Preschooler

The social position of preschooler is the one that the children deemed as most important for the opening half hour of school. It is one for which the parents and older siblings have to some extent prepared them. It is the one they expect the child to fulfill.

On the first day of school, the children entered very quietly. They were greeted at the door by the teacher or one of the assistants. They were assisted in hanging their jackets on the nail under their name. They were instructed to find one of the new and colorful child-size chairs and sit at a small table to look at the new books. They entered in small groups--the carload that they came with from various parts of the colony. They seemed in awe and very quiet. Some had on new clothes. All were clean and combed. They sat, selected books, opened them, and then generally hid behind them, peering out occasionally to look at others and around the room. Many books were upside down. After ten minutes, the children became impatient, although still quiet. Many looked toward the teacher as if awaiting further cues.

The next procedure on that first day was to describe to the children the various activity centers and point out the various games

and toys. Then, instructions were given for the children to play with whatever they liked and do whatever they wanted. The only instructions were that they were to sit at a particular group of benches as soon as the bell rang. The following observation describes the first twenty minutes of play time at the school.

The teacher disappeared into a closet to prepare chocolate milk and observe. Only a few children left their chairs. All looked around rather apprehensively. The assistants took their posts around the room. As children left their chairs, their cousins joined them, and then girls and boys generally separated. Within a short time, a group of girl cousins were playing and laughing over the clay. A group of boy cousins were racing the toy cars. Another trio of girl cousins played with the dolls. Those who were not related to anyone in the school generally stayed in their chairs and looked at or over their books.

Twin boys from a family with no kinsmen on the colony and who reside in a very isolated part of the colony hid behind a bench. One came out only long enough to get a train car which he tried to hide under his shirt.

Meanwhile, the assistants became engrossed in the activities. The mothers worked the clay, the puzzles and drew with the crayons. Another cradled a doll. Suddenly, the mothers became aware that some children were running; some were pounding clay; boys were yelling. The mothers became somewhat frantic and began telling children in their areas, "Don't...." One mother tried to catch a boy unrelated to her who was running, but could not. Upon being reprimanded by the assistants, the children would move from that area of supervision to another and continue the activity.

None of the children talked to the assistants, except for a few daughters who talked to their mothers. (No mother-son

relationships existed in the school.)

At this point, most children were actively involved, and the mothers realized that they had no control. The teacher came out of the closet and rang the bell. The children stopped what they were doing, looked around and then ran to the specified benches. The mothers later expressed their surprise that the children so readily came. At the time they looked relieved that the teacher had regained control.

The benches were arranged in a square, with the children arranging themselves by sex. The girls sat together with space between themselves and the boys who sat together. All children came to the benches. Siblings sat together (all same sex), and same sex cousins sat together. Space separated these from those with no kinsmen. Much pushing and shoving, but no verbal arguments were used in accomplishing this elaborate seating arrangement.

When all were settled in their seat, the teacher began to talk. All listened attentively.

From this long description of role behavior, it is apparent that the social position of preschooler soon lost its significance and others were chosen by the children. By and large, the patterns that were observed during this twenty minute period continued throughout the six weeks of the school. From this description one can see that kinship groups were important in determining social position. The children from the major kinship groups were the first to leave the tables and find activities. The cousins joined together by sex and remained in these groups during the period. These children were active and noisy throughout the period. One boy from a major kinship group who had few kinsmen in the playschool showed little hesitancy about finding an activity. However, he did not join in with others. Those children with

few or no cousins present and who were from small kinship groups did not venture far from the tables. They found less active games and were less noisy than those previously described. Those who represented families with no kinsmen on the colony were the most shy. Some sat with their heads on the table. Twin boys hid behind a bench. They spoke to no one. In all cases, brothers remained with brothers and sisters with sisters. Thus, it seems evident that the children were well aware of the social structure of the colony and the rights that they had because of their position.

Sex seemed to be a more important variable in determining social position than did kinship relationship. A girl chose to be with a girl rather than with a boy cousin, for example. Boys did not play with girls and they did not sit near each other.

Kinship relationships were important, however. Cousins stayed with cousins (of the same sex). Brothers stayed with brothers and sisters with sisters. (No cross sex siblings attended.) Mothers and daughters conversed to a small degree. (No mother-son combinations were present.) On the contrary, the uncle and niece present did not relate to each other, nor did the male and female cousins. Sex divisions seemed more important.

Peer relations were by far more prevalent than adult-child relations. Except for the daughters who incidentally spoke to their mothers, no children initiated interaction with any adults, even though many were related as aunt and nephew or niece. At first the mothers made no attempt to relate to the children during this period, as they were instructed. Then, suddenly, they became aware of their roles as teachers and attempted to control the behavior of the children. The

children largely ignored the attempts of the mothers to control them, thus making the mothers display signs of anxiety. Relief came when the teacher took charge and called the children to the benches. The mothers expressed surprise that the children responded.

Twice a week the Service Corps girls noted behavior of the children during the play period, while the teacher met with the mother-assistants to discuss the progress of the school. Rapport was very good with three of the mothers and fair with the other. It was a common complaint on the part of the mothers during these meetings that the children were not acting as students should act. The mothers no longer considered the children as preschoolers, but as students, and they should act accordingly. The following field notes were taken from teachers' meetings that were held throughout the school term and express the feelings of the teacher assistants concerning the child as student:

"You have to have discipline. To strap kids isn't enough; it only hurts for a few minutes. You have to hurt their pride."

"You've got to put them in penance."

"A hard strap will make them listen, that's for sure."

"If the teacher is too mean though, it scares the kids; but a good paddlin' don't hurt any of them though."

"Strict teachers are better, the ones that make you sit in your seat and be quiet."

"The children are getting tired of playing. I think they need more lessons."

"They need to learn to line up the soldier way."

"You have to be really strict with them during the group teaching. You have to make it so that they won't get away with

anything."

(In answer to the teacher's question, "How would you make them mind?") "... If we only knew that! You just gotta make them."

Although the teacher spent much time trying to convince the teacher assistants that the play materials were designed to provide learning experiences and that the children were learning through play, they were barely convinced. They were most convinced by the fact that by half way through the term most of the quiet, isolated children had begun to participate during the play periods and soon afterwards began to participate during the more structured learning experiences. The teacher assistants commented:

"Have you noticed the change in the Hammond boy? He's starting to learn his numbers?"

"I guess we could have scared him away pretty easily at first."

"Mabel even talks in the group now."

It was very evident, however, that the rights and duties of the student that were ascribed by the mothers were quite contrary to those ascribed by the teacher. Obviously, it was the latter which the children were expected to assume. Although the six year olds came to the playschool with expectations transmitted from their parents and older siblings, they quickly accepted the rights and duties imposed by the teacher. The assistants were obliged to do the same.

The following section will elaborate on four other determinants of the selection of social positions found in the playschool. These determinants were discussed briefly in the description of first day activities and are as follows: kinship group, sex, kinship relationship

and teacher relationship.

Kinship Group as a Determinant

As was previously shown in the description of the social structure of the colony, the kinship group that one is a member of determines to some extent the rights and duties of that group. If one is a member of a large, extended kinship group, then one has more rights than if one is a member of a family that has few kinsmen on the colony. The latter have the least number of rights, and the former the most. Those who belong to small kinship groups hold an intermediate rank. (Recall that many other distinguishing factors are related to size.) By the age of six, the children are apparently well socialized to this stratified system, as the following role behavior will indicate. In the following descriptions the terms "high", "mid", and "low" will be used after children's names to indicate the prestige of their families in terms of their rights.

The seating arrangements that the children chose followed an almost consistent pattern of allowing the children from high prestige families to sit in choice seats, and those from low prestige families to sit in less desirable ones. This right was one ascribed to the social position determined by kinship group.

The teacher arranged the benches in four parallel rows. Three of the rows were equi-distantly spaced, with a large space separating one from the other three. At the given signal the children went to the benches. At first there was much confusion, with children sitting on each other's laps, hoarding space either to save a space for someone or to exclude someone else. The pattern they chose is as follows: the separated row was designated as the front row and was filled

with three Beaver cousins (high), a Loden (high), a Brown (high), Robert (mid), and Billy (mid). All were boys at this front bench.

In the next row, and facing the boys, was a row of all of the high prestige girls and one "mid". This included all of the girls in the school except for two, who are "low". Although the bench was only partially filled, these two girls did not join the others. Instead, they seated themselves in nearby chairs, apart from the benches.

In the third row sat four boys, all ranked "low", except for one "mid".

In the last row sat twin boys from one of the "lowest" ranked families on the colony. Frank (mid) sat in this row at first and then moved up to the next row just as the lesson began.

Although the bench and chair arrangements were changed into many different patterns, the above seating arrangements were always discernible. Both sex and kinship group patterns were evident.

The same pattern was followed when children were presented with a new activity.

At the beginning of the play period a pan of thick suds and a jar holding numerous straws were placed on a table near the center of the room. The activity was not formally supervised and no instructions were given. The children most likely knew that the activity would be left for them to play with for several days before it would be put away.

Six observations were made, three on the first day and three on the second. The first group of children that came to blow were four girls and two boys. Four of the children were from "high" groups, one "mid", and one "low". After about five minutes of blowing, Joyce (high) came up to the table and stood behind Sara (low) who was blowing. With no physical or

verbal communication that was noticeable to me, Sara left the group and Joyce replaced her. Sara did not blow again until the second day, when everyone else had blown and only Violet (low) was at the table blowing.

The next group to blow was two "high" boys and one "mid" girl and a "mid" boy.

The first observation on the second day of the activity found two "mid" boys and a "high" boy blowing. When they left and no one was at the table, three "low" boys entered to blow. When they were finished and left the table, the two remaining children--two "low" girls--had their turn.

Only one child (mid) took a second turn before all of the other children had had one turn. On the third day of the activity many of the "high" children came back for second turns and then the "mid" children. Most of the "low" children did not get a second turn.

It is significant to note that little fighting or arguing is done concerning whose turn it is, or who is first. It seems to be well understood in advance.

Generally, children from low prestige families did not "choose" an activity until all of the other children had left it.

For nearly two weeks Dick (low) and Don (low) played in a parallel fashion with the trucks and cars without ever leaving that particular area. Finally, when no children were at the clay table, and no one was even at the adjacent puzzle table, they slowly ventured from the "transportation" area to play with clay. When Billy (mid) came over to the clay table, Dick (low) started to leave, but remained. When Raymond (high) came, however, both Dick (low) and Don (low) left the table and returned to the "transportation" area. Billy (mid) remained at the clay table with Raymond (high).

The role behavior of two particular children deserves special

note. The two children, Tommy and Louise, each come from high prestige families. However, each have no particular children with whom to identify in the playschool and are thus "loners". Tommy has no kinsmen at all in the playschool. Louise has many cousins, but they are all boys and she does not associate with them at school. Although each of these children generally plays alone, their behavior is very different from the children who play alone who come from low prestige families. These two children are often in the first group, or the first in line. They freely move from activity to activity with seemingly little concern about who else is playing there. Although they are not aggressive, they do not lack for choice positions or toys. The children from low prestige families have none of these rights. From this, it seems evident that the number of kinsmen present in the playschool is not the determining factor, but rather the amount of prestige that the kin group has--and this may be related in part to size.

In the beginning of the school term most of the play groups were dyads--with siblings together, twins together, and pairs of same sex cousins together. Those who had no kinsmen played alone. By the time the term was nearly half finished, the pattern had slightly changed. Larger groups of cousins were playing together, with an occasional child from a high prestige family joining these groups. The low prestige girls tended to remain isolated in their play, but a few of the low prestige boys began playing with others sharing a similar social position. By the last week of the school, a new pattern was firmly established, especially for the boys. The girls remained in small kinship groups, or playing alone; however, the boys entered into activities which involved all thirteen boys in the school. Social

positions in these male activities were sharply defined, and followed a similar pattern whether the game was Cowboys and Indians, or baseball.

Today the major activity for the boys was "Cowboys and Injuns" (to quote one of the participating boys). It was a continuation of yesterday's game. Larry (high) got the ten feet long nylon cord, wrapped it around himself and then around his cousin (high). This is the team of horses. Ralph (high) is driving them and yelling "Whoa" and "Gitup" at appropriate times. They are racing the length of the community hall, leaping on and off the stage at one end. Marshall and Ralph (both high) are running alongside the team. Marshall (high) rushes ahead of the team and leaps up on the stage to intercept the team. "Get those horses out of this house!" (the doll center), he yells. The team gallops off.

Elmer (low) is on the stage with a toy rifle, shooting at the team as it approaches. Joseph (low) parallels this behavior with a wooden mallet being used as a tomahawk. Four other boys (three low and one mid) participated only when the team was on the stage. Then they would gallop around, yelling, and then watch the team as it galloped to the other end of the room.

Jack (high) takes bells strung on a wire and says, "Here, put these on your team." The driver stops and puts them on the rope.

Brian (low) is watching the team and then suddenly begins running alongside of the driver (high). The driver yells, "Go away, you're not driving." Brian walks away and sits on the bench momentarily and then joins the others (mid) who were galloping along behind the team.

Tommy (a loner, high) joins the team. The three team members lap with their tongues, whinny, kick their heels and bob their heads as they gallop.

Ralph (high), the team driver, stops on

the stage and puts on the Indian headdress and then continues driving the team.

All of the boys are now participating in some way. The activity continues for approximately twenty-five minutes.

This same pattern of stratification was present in the batting order of a baseball game. The "highs" batted first, the "mid" group second, and finally the "lows". Those in the latter group had to be asked by the pitcher (teacher assistant) if they wanted to bat, because of their hesitancy in assuming the position of batter. Three of them did bat, but the fourth did not--he walked away and threw stones down the hill.

Sex as a Determinant

Throughout the discussion of social positions as determined by kinship group, it was apparent that sex was also an important determinant. Boys played with boys and girls with girls, or alone. Almost no activity joined the sexes, except those designed by the teacher. It is significant to note that only boys formed gang type games that included all the boys, while the girls played only in small kinship groups or alone. This behavior of the boys parallels that of their fathers, who have wider contacts in the village and are less confined to their homes. The behavior of the girls is consistent with that of their mothers and of that expected of them at home, where girls do not have the roaming rights that their brothers have.

As the children segregated themselves along sex lines for play, certain activities became identified as those for girls and those for boys. Some remained ambiguous. Generally, the games and toys requiring action were the boys', and those not were the girls'. Balls,

bats, transportation toys with wood shavings, toy animals and tinker toys were boy's activities. Puzzles, clay, books at the tables, sewing cards, small interlocking blocks were primarily girl's activities. There were some instances in which area seemed more important than the activity itself. For example, both girls and boys painted and drew at the chalk board. However, a girls' area and a boys' area were designated by the children.

There were no spaces available for boys to paint in their usual places. However, one space was open in the girls' area. No boys painted there, and they waited until spaces were vacant in their own area.

The usual place for the books was at the small children's tables. Girls usually sat at the tables, looking at the pictures. Boys seldom did. One day, some books were stacked on the stage for repairs. Boys soon began looking at them. From that day, books were left on the stage and boys freely looked at them.

When the clean-up period came, it became customary for the girls to clean up the areas associated with their activities and for the boys to do likewise.

When the stage area was converted by the boys from a doll area to a horse stable, it was the boys who chose to clean that area. They stacked books, toys, dolls and rifles together--whatever toys were on the stage. Girls no longer used the doll center.

There were several indications that girls had fewer rights to boys' activities than boys did to girls'.

Although the girls played with the clay almost all of the time, today four girls left the clay table when five boys walked up to the table and began poking at the clay. Within a few minutes, all of the girls had left. No words were exchanged

between the girls and the boys. The girls separated and found separate activities.

Girls generally did not move into a new activity unless no one or only girls were playing. Girls did not join boys in activities, nor did they attempt to have them leave an activity. In one case, boys completely took over a girls' activity and girls did not return to it.

At the beginning of the school term, girls occasionally played in the doll center on the stage. They dressed, fed and cared for the dolls, and prepared play meals. Boys never interfered with their play.

About half way through the term, boys began playing in the doll center. The boys' play in this center seemed much rougher than their play in other centers.

Eric and Alex toss the doll to each other and laugh hard. They end up by pushing each other off the stage and continuing the laughter. Robert is ironing on the stove. Frank puts on a lady's hat, looks at himself in the full length mirror and giggles. Other boys join in the giggling and try on hats themselves. Dresses and aprons are put on next. They enjoy teasing each other and laughing. Elmer leaves the mirror and kicks the doll on the floor. Billy takes the panties off one doll and says, "Look at these little tights." Gilbert walks by the doll cradle and kicks it. It rocks wildly, and he repeats it when it stops rocking.

The boys are very loud and much laughter is heard. Boys from all three prestige groups are participating, but much of the play is parallel, with little interaction between the boys.

After several consecutive days of playing with the clothes, the mirror and the dolls and doll furniture, the stage was used for other activities initiated by the boys. Later it became the focus of Cowboy and Indian games. It was never a doll center after the boys played there.

In the following instance, a girl tries to maintain rights for an activity, but loses to a boy.

Carol has spent most of the morning stringing wooden beads on colored wires. She has made three necklaces and is trying one of them on when Harold approaches the table. Harold is holding a wire and is apparently looking for beads. Carol yells in a voice heard all over the room, "Get out of here, you're not a girl!" Harold puts down the wire and leaves, but soon returns. He takes some beads and a wire and begins stringing them away from Carol and the table. Carol leaves the table, taking her necklaces with her, and shows them to Linda and Mary. Harold sits down in Carol's seat, and she does not return to the table.

Almost no teasing, or conversation of any kind, took place between boys and girls. However, a considerable amount of teasing took place within each sex group. Boys never seemed to get irritated by the teasing, although some of it was rather persistent. Girls took teasing by other girls much more seriously. They often sulked, or isolated themselves from the others if they were being teased. The following incident shows a boy teasing his cousins about playing with girls.

Three cousins were watching a group of girl cousins blow bubbles. Harry, a cousin to the boys, says, "These boys have lots of girl friends." Arthur objected loudly, but Harry continues. "You're playing with girls!" The three cousins quickly leave, joining Harry in another activity.

The only time the children were required to line up was at dismissal time. Confusion and disorder always reigned while the children ordered themselves.

Today at dismissal time, the instructions were for the children to form one line behind a particular boy. After much

pushing, pulling and loud talking, the children finally arranged themselves in an order apparently acceptable to themselves. The appointed boy remained first in line--the boys' line. A new line was formed by the girls, however. When the children had ordered themselves, they waited quietly to be dismissed.

Kinship Relationship as a Determinant

Besides kinship group and sex, a third important variable in determining social positions in the playschool was kinship relationship. We have already mentioned that the kinship positions for the six year old present in the school were cousin, uncle, niece, nephew, brother, sister, and daughter. All of these, however, were not selected by the children as being appropriate. The efficacy of others changed. A discussion of the importance of this variable is limited by the fact that all the possible social positions related to kinship were not present. For example, we know only of the behavior of the six year old daughter to her mother in the playschool, because there were no sons present. Also, there were no brother-sister combinations present, only same sex siblings. Therefore, it is difficult to know if the behavior is related to rights and duties associated with a sex linked position or a kinship position.

All but seven of the twenty-four children in the school had either a mother or an aunt present in the role of teacher assistant. However, the children with adult kinsmen in the school related much more to their peers than to the adults. This parallels their behavior in the neighborhood, where adults have little control over their children. Recall the description of the behavior of the children on the first day of school. When teacher assistants reprimanded the children for their

behavior, the children merely moved to another area and continued as they pleased. This is typical of the child's behavior when he is in the position of either nephew, niece, or offspring.

When children needed an adult (children were required to ask permission from an adult to leave the school room for any reason), the following behavior was apparent: daughters went to their mothers, nephews and nieces went to their aunts, and the others went to the teacher. It should be stressed, however, that the children very rarely initiated contact with an adult, except in the case of daughters to their mothers. Even in the latter case, peer relations were more numerous. By the end of the school term, children were seen interacting more with adults and more with adults to whom they were not related.

During the last week of school, one of the girls in the school who had both a mother and a twin present became good friends with a teacher assistant from an unrelated kinship group. They talked to each other several times in the course of the last week. At one time they were seen almost embracing each other--the child stood on a bench and each had his hands on the shoulders of the other.

Although very little behavior in the playschool was viewed as being related to the child's position as either offspring or nephew or niece, it is difficult to say what the child's behavior would have been if, for example, non-Metis assistants had been used, or Metis unknown on the colony.

One of the teacher assistants was a cousin to one of the children. The same woman, however, had a daughter of her own in the school; thus the two cousins were of different generations. Their interaction in the school was almost non-existent, suggesting that the

older cousin stood more in the position of aunt than cousin. Generation, or perhaps age, becomes a more important variable than actual kinship relationship.

The social position of uncle and niece were apparently meaningless to two of the children so related. Although the children were the same age, sex differences were more important in determining their social positions. The children were not observed interacting in the school, although they occasionally played together when they visited their grandparents.

The importance of cousin and same sex siblings interacting with each other was stressed in the section describing kinship relationships. These groups are not only related, but are also friends and neighbors. Kinship and proximity have made them so. Above all, they are peers, and this is an important social position. The rights and duties of the child as a peer in the playschool are like those found in the neighborhood.

Teacher Relationship as a Determinant

In the child's relationship to the teacher, two social positions were evident: that of friend and that of student.

Before the opening of the school, and during the course of the previous year, I had visited all of the homes of the preschoolers, knew all of their parents, and was well acquainted with all of the children living in the village plus many others. Therefore, the position of friend was an expected one. One would expect a certain amount of cognitive dissonance, however, in the minds of the children. As described previously, the teacher was presented to the child as being a threatening and even mean person, who would "whip them into shape".

However, in this case, the teacher--at least outside of the playschool--appeared to be a friendly person. Possibly because of my non-authoritarian position in the school, the children and I remained friends.

There were certain social skills that I felt it was necessary for the children to learn to prepare them for Grade 1. One of these skills was being able to call the teacher by a proper name. Therefore, the children in the school were to call me by my last name and not by my first as most of them were accustomed to doing in the neighborhood. This was a hard lesson, and complicated by the fact that the Cree language, with which many of the children were somewhat acquainted, does not distinguish male and female in the same way that English does.

Randy was sitting at the table, quietly playing, when he called to me. "Judy!" he called in a loud voice. I quietly walked over to him and said, "Randy, remember my school name? Call me by that now." Randy continued playing at the table and in a few minutes, in a very loud voice, called to me, "Mr. Hatt". I responded to his call. (My husband, who drove many of the children to school, noted that several call him Mrs. Hatt.)

It is significant to note that the children were much more free in relating to me outside of the school than inside. The following is a common example:

Phyllis, upon seeing me approach her house, ran to greet me, yelling, "Hi, Judy." She was a student in the playschool, which was now in its third week. "Hey, come look at this," she called, showing me a mocking bird in a cage. We talked for several minutes, with Phyllis initiating most of the interaction.

Her behavior in the classroom was different, however. When she spoke to me, which was rarely, it was in a quiet,

whispering voice. She rarely initiated interaction, although I was available during the play period for the children to talk to me if they desired. If I asked her a question in school, even privately, she seemed shy, and often did not answer.

Although the children were able to relate to me increasingly more during the course of the playschool, for most it did not appear easy. However, outside of the school setting they were able to tell me stories, converse about their activities and include me in their games. Although the school setting was in many ways as permissive as that in the neighborhood, the children responded differently in the school. Adults, a White teacher, and a school setting placed them in the social position of student, and they responded to the teacher in ways that they perceived as appropriate. Outside of the school, I was their friend; inside, the teacher.

This social position of student did not affect their behavior with their peers, however, but only with their behavior in relation to the teacher. During the play periods, they responded much as they did in the neighborhood. Teacher assistants and the teacher seldom interfered, however, during these periods.

During the play periods, the teacher and her assistants often moved to one corner of the room for discussions. There was virtually no difference in the behavior of the children when the adults were standing in the play areas and when the adults were not conspicuously around.

The following gives an example of the behavior of children when the teacher interrupted their play.

Don and Harry (cousins) were wrestling on the floor. I intervened and told them to find something to play with. Don replied matter of factly, "I don't want to play."

I replied, "OK", and walked away. Don picked up the jump rope and jumped once and then put it down and walked away. Harry picked up a toy shotgun and shot me several times, calling, "Bang, bang." Then he shot at the children.

Half-way through the course of the playschool an event took place which significantly, if only temporarily, changed the role behavior of the students. Each child in the school district who was of the age to enter grade one the following fall (this included all of the children in the colony playschool) was required to attend a four-day testing period in the nearby town. The grade one students were dismissed for the period, and the preschoolers attended. One significant observation of the children in the school was that the teachers gave the preschoolers very little in the way of positive cues for behavior. Instead,

... children were told, "Be nice"; "act right"; "walk like fairies"; "color it right"; "line up"; "do the best you can"; etc. If the children did not follow these instructions, they were reprimanded, or asked to "do it over". Children who did not know the content of these commands were left to follow the examples of the children who received positive comments from the teachers.

It is assumed that the Metis children from the colony learned the following role behaviors from the children who had learned cues for survival in the system.

Within the next three days after the testing period in town, the following behaviors were observed frequently. Previously, they were either rare or non-existent.

Today there were several incidents of children seeking my approval of their work. During the work periods, children left their seats to show me what they had accomplished. Previously, they seemed to

do the work or activity for themselves. Rarely, they would show it to a close friend or to their mother, if she was present.

Before today almost no tattling occurred in the school. It is not accustomed behavior in the neighborhood setting. However, today both boys and girls came especially to me (as opposed to the teacher assistants) to report the behavior of another child. Generally it involved a child from a high prestige family reporting the behavior of a child from a low prestige family.

There seemed to be a conscious effort on the part of some children to do better in their "lessons". One boy, who did not do well in the testing situation at school, practiced writing his name and numbers at the board during both play sessions. Previous to this he chose primarily active games.

The children, from the time of the testing period on, sat more quietly at the tables, raised their hands more (even if they did not know the answers) and held attention longer during the structured teaching sessions.

Many of the children began asking permission to do activities that they had been freely doing since the first day of the playschool. "Can I paint?" was a frequent question, even though the children knew that previously they could whenever the paints were out.

In drawing or painting the children often asked, "Is this OK?" Drawings at the board were noticeably smaller, as were drawings on paper. Pictures were less abstract, and the children were often able to tell you the content of the art.

The children now identified the teacher, the White teacher, as being the one with authority. None of the above related a child to a teacher assistant. It seemed apparent to the children that now there was only one teacher, or at least one real

teacher.

These changes in the behavior of the children were very apparent to the teacher assistants and they commented during a teacher meeting.

"They (the children) play together better.
There is less running around and noise."

"They ask permission more now. Before,
they just did things and were on their own
and now they ask you before they do it."

"They're quieter now and stay in their
seats better."

Apparently the teacher assistants felt that the changes of the children were for the better. One seemed to sum up their feelings, "It did them good to have a mean teacher."

It seems significant to note that three of the children from low prestige families, who seemed quite frightened during the four days at the centralized school, did not attend the playschool for several days after it resumed. Very little absenteeism occurred during the school term, and previously these children had not been absent at all. One of the mothers of these children told me, "I don't know what's wrong. All of a sudden he doesn't want to come." All three returned within a few days.

The two brothers who spent the first week of the playschool hiding behind the benches spent most of the first play period after the testing period hiding again behind the benches. They came out, however, during the second period, but remained isolated.

Because most of these behaviors of the children were not reinforced by the teacher of the playschool, most of them were soon forgotten.

SUMMARY

From the observed behavior of the six year old Metis child and the abstraction of behavior into concepts of social positions and rights and duties, we can determine the range of possible variation in behavior in this community. It is evident that the appropriate behaviors of the Metis child within the various sociological or "inherent" settings transferred to the playschool setting and would transfer to other settings such as school and work settings outside of the village. At age six the Metis child is observed as acting within the social structure of his community with some facility. He selects among known alternatives available to him within the community structure and is able to act to further his own interests within the structural givens of his community.

As the Metis child is observed in the various early stages of the life cycle, we see that in almost every stage the cultural conditioning is continuous from that of the successive stages. The transitions between shifts in social positions are gradual. Two exceptions break this continuity and may be viewed as somewhat traumatic for the child--one is hospitalization in the nearby town or in the city, and the other is entrance into school at age six. Because of the importance of entrance into school and its relation to culturally conditioned community actions, the six year old is considered as an important subject of descriptive study. The objective description of rights and duties leads the investigator to the point where he may consider addressing questions of process and change.

Although a structural model does not tell us why the child behaves, it does allow us to identify some of the criteria upon which

choices are made and partially discloses why the child acts as he does. From the knowledge of these canons of choice the anthropologist may guide his succeeding studies of process and change into more productive and more relevant questions. For example, questions of cross cultural comparison may now be phrased. Questions about the relationship between social structure and personal character may be addressed. And, many aspects of the so-called "culture of poverty" may be seen more clearly and addressed as related to "Metis culture" in northern Alberta.

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